

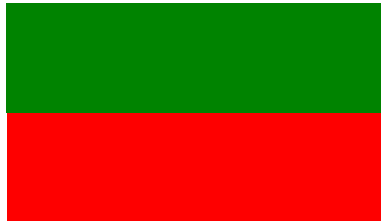
A Nation Sundered

Part One: The end of the Blob

by

Gödafrieu Válcadác'h

*Signatory of the Compact of 19 May, 2004 and a Founding Parent of the Republic of Talossa
Twenty-sixth and Twenty-ninth Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Talossa*



Preface

Azul!

While going through the March 2000 issue of *Wired* magazine, I came upon an article about a “Kingdom of Talossa” and “micronations”. It was the first time I found out about the Regipäts, after which, I forgot about it, surprisingly enough. But two months later, I remembered the article, and have not forgotten about it since. And when I read that article that second time, I was bowled over.

Of course, there was the possibility this “Kingdom of Talossa” was some internet hoax or con game. But I figured the journalistic pros at the nationally-distributed *Wired* magazine would have checked things out. Hence, I could trust what I saw on talossa.com and Wittenberg. On 6 June 2000, I made my first post on Wittenberg and my debut appearance on the Talossan stage.

In hindsight, though, I should have read that article more critically; for, as I would come to realize, it was and still is the seminal work on Talossa penned by someone who had never (and still has never) been associated with Talossa or Talossans, Old-Growthers or otherwise, in any way, shape, or form. Alex Blumberg, the article’s author unwittingly put in subtle clues to things that would crop up and bite us all four years later.

Why didn't I give that article a closer look? For one, I was wowed by the idea that a childhood fantasy-country-kingdom complete with history, culture, and language could survive for twenty-and-a-half years, attracting and maintaining an audience of active participants. *Ar Päts* seemed to confirm all the fun things I picked up from the article. I checked out Talossa's web presence and found it worthy of further investigation.

With this hopeful optimism and like so many before and after, I made my appearance on the Talossan stage. Some who came to Talossa before and after me were quick to pick up on Ben’s other side. For me, it took almost four years. The only explanation I have is that when I first came to Talossa, I was less mature and a bit more naïve than I am now.

Odd that maturity comes to my mind and pen now. Of the many factors that brought on 1 June 2004, I believe the most important factor leading to the Republic's foundation was a different maturity: Ben Madison's. Many in the Kingdom of Talossa had begun to believe that Ben had never really grown up. There was also a general perception that Amy Durnford's overbearing influence had influenced Ben toward more extreme reactions in the 2003-2004 period. The combined effect of the Insult of 26 December 2003 and Amy's previous and genuine domestic violence miseries, added to her absolute loathing of Chris Gruber, made Amy and Ben unable or unwilling to see Gruber's statement as it truly was: a fanciful way of saying "drop dead".

Most of what follows is documented in publicly-available sources, especially Wittenberg X. The central conflict of this period was the growing hatred of the King towards Chris Gruber and the fallout from the monstrous Amy/Chris personality clash that was their first meeting at TalossaFest weekend 2003.

Some would say this document is full of ‘spin’. I don't deny that many of my raw emotions from 2004 are preserved here for posterity. Then I was angry. I'm still sad, but resolved to see our community come into a Talossan future as bright as it can be. Hindsight’s wisdom and soothing balm has soothed much of my pain.

I made my first post on what was then Wittenberg VI, and my first appearance in Talossa, on 6 June 2000. I became a citizen of the Kingdom of Talossa during the Living Cosà of Saturday, 5 August 2000, on the same Clark as Amy Durnford. For the first three years or so-until October 2003--the Regipäts was a barrel of fun. Yet for all the frustration and sheer stupidity of the last eighteen months, I have to remember what Talossa has been for me: a journey of nationbuilding, enjoyment, frustration, and personal growth.

Of course in 2000, had someone told me I would be, four years later, helping *Miestrá Schivá*, the “Greek God Guy”, and *Ián Anglatzará* build a Talossan micronation devoid of Ben Madison, I would have thought that person to be crazy.

On both my visits to Talossan soil (aka Milwaukee, Wisconsin), Ben Madison was a gracious and genuine host who went out of his way to make my stays there enjoyable as could be. Talossa gave me a window into the wide world

around me and an instant circle of friends. Only since Independence from the Regipäts have I fully realized the many positive things Talossa has added to my life. I am a more informed voter, a more tolerant individual, and a better-rounded human being. I have learned a great deal about history, languages, and religion. At the end of the day, it was R. Ben Madison, through his refusal to let Talossa die, who made all this possible for me. That I will never forget.

Why, then, would I leave him? Why would I help found what those still in the Kingdom might term a "faux" Talossa? It was because I came to the realization things had gotten so bad and Ben Madison's behavior had become so unbearable to be around that I could no longer, in good conscience, recommend that others join the Kingdom of Talossa. That's the simple answer, the lightning flash that came after a long story had unfolded.

The saga of my transformation from affection and loyalty for Robert I to disappointment and treason is not mine alone. It is that of every Founding Parent, every former Liberal, every former Penguinian, and every other former citizen or prospective of the Kingdom of Talossa Ben drove off. Since 1997, I estimate there have been around *twenty-five* or so of these individuals.

Just before the Living Cosâ of August 2000, I rang TalossaFest and spoke with Gary Cone and possibly Ián Metáiriá. It was also the first time I had ever heard Ben's pleasant speaking voice. The first thing I asked him was, "How have you been able to keep up Talossa for so long?" He instantly replied, "Because I would not admit defeat." In hindsight, some of us might say that was Ben's whole problem. Talossan history from November 2002 to 1 June 2004 could be summarized this way: in the end, R. Ben Madison loved his imaginary country and political fantasy more than the friendships and family he had built through it.

Halloween 2003 took place on my watch as the Kingdom's Prime Minister. As someone who played a key, though unintentional, role in the debacle, I feel a duty to tell the true story. Halloween's fallout has been helped me better understand my Talossanity and myself in general. This document is not merely my duty to the Kingdom and Republic; it has been a cathartic experience.

This project began as an attempt to write a 'Big History' of the Kingdom of Talossa for the two-year period beginning at about the end of the Progressive-Conservative-Party 'Pot Pie Blob,' as Wes Erni coined it years and years ago. I soon learned that such a task would take more time than I could spare. The result before you is this more-focused work. It is not a complete day-by-day history of the Kingdom of Talossa from November 2002 onward. It is, instead, the chronicle of the decline of Kingdom of Talossa from a happy community of nation-builders, 'language nazis' and the like to a place of paranoia and mistrust in which the atmosphere had become poisonous.

This is not intended to be the sole, definitive telling of this story, though I have done all I can to objectively lay out the cold, hard facts. While Chris Gruber shares part of the blame for what happened, I hope to show that what Ben did trumped all. At this writing, Chris Gruber himself is working on a very similar project. I pray others will do the same, and that you'll read them as well.

For the record, the following were the main events that pushed me away from the Kingdom of Talossa, (though the first and second items on this list were sufficient provocation for my leaving the Regipäts). This report details them all.

- Ben and Amy's public airing of Chris Gruber's court records
- Ben and Amy's use of these records to falsely accuse Gruber of violent crime
- Ben's attempt by way of 32nd Cosâ, RZ27 to throw Chris out of Talossa
- Ben's callous reaction to Lisagate
- Effectively kicking Art Verbotten, a friend of his for two decades and the 'Conscience of Talossa' in the teeth
- Effectively kicking Bill Cooper, well-liked by almost everyone regardless of political parties, in the teeth
- Bill Cooper's renunciation, an objective statement from a relatively new citizen (who had no Talossan axes to grind, partly due to health problems) on the dangerous precedent Ben set with regard to his prying into Chris Gruber's past.

One should think that in the interest of the smooth flow of the text, I would refrain from inserting into this document Wittenberg post after Wittenberg post. However, I am no Faulkner or Capote. And even if I were, there is no replacement for the players in this drama speaking to us once more -- in their own words. It is true that a lot went on behind the scenes. But, the main acts were played out on Wittenberg for the world to see.

But, please don't just take my word for it. Look through all primary source documents, read others' accounts, and wherever and whenever possible, speak with citizens both in the Republic and the Kingdom and make up your own mind.

As for mine, here it is.

Gödafríeu Válcadác'h

Founding Father of the Republic of Talossa

Twenty-sixth and Twenty-ninth Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Talossa

Citizen of the Kingdom of Talossa from 5 August 2000 to 1 June 2004

1 June 2005/II/xxvi

Acknowledgements

Many thanks go out to Marti-Páir Furxhéir whose tireless maintenance of Wittenberg X has enabled its preservation and whose modifications of same in the autumn of 2004 enabled me to create a text-only printable archive of every Wittenberg X post from its inception on 20 February 2003 to 1 June 2004. Having this archive made my research processes much-easier.

Many thanks also go to Chris Gruber, whose obsessive photography at TalossaFest 2003 has provided Talossa with one of its greatest photo galleries ever and gave me the ability to add a little color to this project. Many thanks go also to all the other picture-takers whose work appears, whoever you might be, and please let me know who you are!

I also thank Jacques Barzun for his wonderful magnum opus, *From Dawn to Decadence*, who gave me the idea of segueing from one section to the next. It helped immensely with the flow of the text, though I make this disclaimer about my writing: *Je ne suis pas Jacques Barzun!*

Finally, a very special thanks goes to the man once derided in the Kingdom as the “Greek God Guy”, J. K. Kelly, whose copious proofing and suggestions were a Zeus-send! Ditto for Chris Gruber.

Foreword

Gödafríeu Válcadác’h has rendered a signal service to the Republic of Talossa in writing this landmark history. In *A Nation Sundered*, GV not only examines the events of the secession of the Republic, but also at the roots of the conflict - roots that began months earlier, in the Halloween Crisis and events even further back. This solidly researched book ought to be read by every Talossan, in the Republic and in the Kingdom, who wants to have a better understanding of the radical changes that Talossa has been through in the past year.

GV's contribution to the field of Talossan scholarship is as timely as it is valuable, coming as it does on the heels of the six-month anniversary of independence. As we look back at what we have accomplished in that time-frame, it is good to remember why we left the Kingdom in the first place - and this book brings that period vividly to life, both for those of us who were directly involved, and for those of us who came to the Republic afterward to share in this great endeavour.

Michael Pope
2 December, 2004

Cover photos

To the right of the Kingdom's flag is Ben Madison, ca. 1996. He has used this photo since the beginning of the cybercit era. Below that is the flag of the Republic of Talossa, and to the left of it is Chris Gruber at home in 2003.

*To Ben and Amy,
Without whom this book would not have been possible*

A tale of two Talossans



Chris Gruber at a friend's wedding in October, 2003

The Temper of Gruber

[Andy Lowry:] > > Chris is a citizen of long stature and proven dedication. He cares about Talossa deeply enough that this latest round of disgusting slanders is affecting him in a personal way.

>

[Ben:] > And his EXTREMELY personal comments about me and my family are affecting me in exactly the same way. Are you willing to at least accept that? Because if you're not, then you're just being partisan and there is no reason to listen to you.

Well, I know that Chris is being Chris-- but I can see his motivation. When he sees an attack, he is fiercely retributive. I am too, sometimes. So are you, sometimes. Remember when I was a "traitor" to the USA? Stuff gets personal in a hurry here. I've tried, myself, to be more careful about that. I've managed to find a friendly accord with such people as Michael and [IÁN M.], even though we're quite different in our approaches to reality. I can see that rabidity doesn't do much good overall-- however, it's a great leavener when things are dull :-).

Much of what appeared below has been responded to by Chris (the sneaky li'l bastidge) and I won't disagree with his thoughts. I WILL disagree with his presentation of said thoughts, at times. There's no need for the outright nastiness, I think, though I do understand it.

-from RE: Immigration Minister Andy Lowry? (Witt X 6146),
posted by Andy on November 13, 2003 - 22:36

[Andy:] > Chris, would you make ugly innuendo about my sexual history? Would you slight my parents? Would you make fun of the work I do, and my employment history? Is the fact that I've been divorced fair game for insults from you? Would you refer to my former spouses as "crones" (both were about five years older than I)? I haven't yet had the misfortune to lose a parent, but I've lost a number of close friends-- would they be subject to your vitriol? If not, then why not? Merely because I haven't sufficiently pissed you off yet?

If you flat-out lied about me and hurt my friends in an effort to hurt me, then YES. I will hurt anyone who decides to hurt me and mine first. Everything I've done has been a retaliatory tactic. If you cannot see that, then shame on you and on anyone else who thinks I've started ANYTHING.

I fucking warned you and everyone else: if you kick me in the knees, I will cut off your balls. I do not fucking play.

-from Then kindly stop lying. (Witt X 7705)

posted by Retroradio Gruber on December 30, 2003 - 03:36



The Wrath of Ben

The red-hot Temper of Christopher Curtis Gruber would ultimately be trumped by the ice-cold Wrath of Robert Ben Madison of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, also known as Robert I of the House of Rouergue, King of Talossa, (pictured above with his wife and Queen Amy Durnford in Montreal in August 2003, visiting Marti-Páir Furxhéir). I let the complete story of Halloween 2003 and Spring 2004 illustrate the Wrath of Ben in full and venomous flower.

Ben is not an evil person. Like all of us, he has flaws. However, unlike most other people, his particular flaw-set prompts him to do spectacularly foolish things. Both he and Chris Gruber are brilliant people with so much to offer the world, and it is a great shame that their boundless energies and enthusiasms could no longer remain united in purpose and were wasted on this whole affair. But what happened, happened.

And Talossa would never be the same.

[Ben:] > Unless you treat every Talossan equally, including me, you fall into the classic Opposition mindset and there is nowhere to go but further down into paranoia and hatred--like [Ián Anglatzarâ].

How very odd-- for all your talk about fairness and equality et al, it was YOU ALONE who freaked out about this [Ián A.] person. I thought he seemed interesting and sane.

-from RE: Immigration Minister Andy Lowry? (Witt X 6146),

posted by Andy on November 13, 2003 - 22:36

Andy is referring to the aborted return of Ián Anglatzarâ to the Kingdom in January, 2003, the details of which was the subject of the Gruber Report



Ben (left) and Grubi in the Cosâ Chamber in Abbavilla on 12 July, 2003

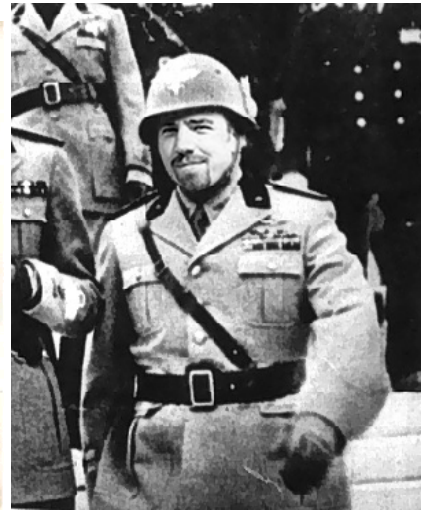
Boredom



The Traitorous Liberals had renounced their citizenships and vanished. The last bastions of Penguinia, Sauls, and Gallagher were nowhere to be found. And the country could breathe free once more. All was right with the cosmic order. There were no more enemies. There were no more battles. Loyal Talossans had won out, with the glorious victory memorialized in Ar Päts. And the Progressive Conservative Party of the Kingdom of Talossa held supreme power, as it had for ten successive years by way of the votes from Ben Madison's family and contacts as well as a continuous influx of brand-new citizens gravitating toward the party endorsed by the nation's Founder and King and active Talossans such as Michael Pope, Ián Metáiriâ and myself. This combination seemed impervious to all political opposition, able to retain a majority government almost indefinitely.

To understand the history of the Progressive Conservative Party, one must realize that it had long been an umbrellamalagamation of various political threads and interests. In late 2002 it was no different. Indeed, at one time many years before the span of time I am about to share with you, Wes Erni likened the party to a "pot pie blob" held together only by its enveloping crust (L'Oraclâ #10). With no more battles to fight, it had become mainly a tool of political power. That mattered quite a bit in Talossa, for most Talossans' primary interest in the nation was its politics. The Opposition ZPT and RCT despaired of ever breaking the PC's iron grip. The only people really working on *el glelf Talossân* were Ben and Tomás Gariçéir, with some assistance from Andrea Thompson and Ron Rosalez. Talossa had become a stagnant place where, instead of Talossan politics and Talossan things, the chief topic of conversation was American politics. Such was the Talossa I, as the nation's twenty-sixth Prime Minister, presided over in October of 2002.

In this atmosphere of national doldrums, punctuated by an occasional Válcadác'hian Prime Dictate, Chris Gruber and Tomás Gariçéir had a lark. The Kingdom had a grand tradition of acute fascination with the aesthetic trappings (but not the ideals) of fascism, especially as displayed in the person of Benito Mussolini. Hence...



These are three of the original art photos Tomás and Chris put together in October-November, 2002. There were more, but these rank as among their best. Combine this spurt of creativity with the stagnation caused, in many people's eyes, by the PC monolith, and you have the potential for...well, something.

But before "something" came about, something else took centre stage:

"F--k America"

[Fuck America, They Are Greedy Selfish Fucks Who Deserve The Evil They Elected](#)

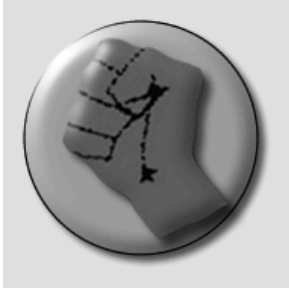
- **Chris Gruber** 11/06/2002 12:50:47 EST [Lowry 115]



Such was future Howard Dean supporter Chris Gruber's reaction to the Republican Party's winning control of both houses of the United States Congress for the upcoming Congressional term. This was the first time in more than fifty years that Republicans had held all three at once. It was nothing more than Gruber's temper getting the best of him.

Most of Talossa, of course, was stunned and offended. Gruber did the only thing he could to make amends: he apologized. The whole thing blew over, even with the most-vocal of critics, Michael Pope and Ián Metáiriâ.

The Pot-Pie Blob blows up



*At left is the original logo for the Grey Congress Party, and at right is the logo for the Black Hand Party
Between them is an additional illustration I used in L'Oraclá.*

On 3 December 2002, it happened. Chris Gruber and Tomás Gariçéir announced on Wittenberg they had left the Progressive Conservative Party to form El Parti del Congreßeu Grischún (The Grey Congress Party).

The new party's fifty-word statement, issued that day, says it all about their vision for Talossa:

El Parti del Congreßeu Grischún isch zedicat àl reclamaziun dal Glórià Talossán par 'n ceadfà renovicadà dal divertà, dal actività culturál, dal fermità dal taradnà, dal respectù pèr la tradiziun, és dal efcancù del governamaintsch. Noi volent terminar Talossa sè Grült Seriosità, és dúciarhent el vej à'iensà Renataschà Culturál Talossán.

Translated into English: "The Grey Congress Party is committed to the reclamation of Talossan Glory through a renewed sense of fun, cultural activity, firmness of character, respect for tradition, and government efficiency. The Grey Congress Party seeks to end Talossa's Great Seriousness, and we shall lead the way towards a Talossan Cultural Renaissance."

The Grey Congress' first step, unfortunately, was directly into the honey bucket. Issued that day along with their fifty-word statement was their Platform. The initial version of Plank #1 was: "We call for a moratorium on the discussion of United States politics on Wittenberg. [Thanks to Chris Gruber for the exact wording of this plank. I do not have an archive of the first version of the PGC Platform]". This platform plank was a direct reaction to the Wittenberg flame war that had broken out over "F--k America". The word 'moratorium' was a horrid mistake, with clear connotations of governmental censorship and direct intervention.

On 5 December 2002 the PC received another blow. That day, Ben Madison and Wes Erni left to bring La Mhà Nheagrà (the Black Hand Party of yore) back from the political mists. (Lowry 94, L'Oraclá #12 and #13).

The next day [Lowry 93], the offending sentence in the Grey Congress' Platform was replaced by, "We call for a measure of calm when discussing United States politics on Wittenberg." (Boldface in original.) But the damage had already been done. The ZPT had a field day with this, and the Black Hand, pre-empted by two days by the Grey Congress in its public re-incarnation, now had a new lease on life via the Grey's handing them a free political machine-gun.

There are a couple of ways "moratorium" could have been handled. One could simply give the Greys the benefit of a doubt and just let the thing slide, but I am not sure that would have been a good thing. While it quickly became clear that the wording was poorly thought out, any hint of government interference in free speech had serious connotations. Of course, "Moratorium Gruber" became a part of the Ben-lexicon.

It is tempting to say that the "F--k America" statement (and the PC's outcry against it) was the direct precursor to the demise of the "Pot Pie Blob". It was not. The birth of the Grey Congress and the rebirth of the Black Hand in particular were results of long-diverging visions of Talossa's future. These visions were not, in the pure forms intended by those who had them, likely to see the light of day in the Progressive Conservative camp.

It is easy to speculate that "F--k America" was the beginning of the end of Ben and Gruber's friendship. However, this Wittenberg X post from Grubi bears noting.

[Jeff:] > Thinking of this, the fact that at T-Fest 2003 of his saying to Gruber that he wanted Gruber to become the next King makes sense. Get the loathsome Gruber out of a spot where he could be politically-active. For Ben hated Gruber from "F--k America" onwards... That's when the Halloween Crisis began: with Ben's inability to forgive Gruber for "F--k America". Strange that that forgiveness came from everyone else (except Amy), including Ian M. and Michael Pope!

You've mixed things up badly here. Ben never truly cared about the "Fuck America" remark. He used it when he thought it was politically viable to do so, but he didn't speak out against it as much as some folks like to remember. It was IM who offered the loudest protests.

What ticked Ben off was, before anything else, the formation and announcement of the GCP. He and Wes were starting their own little game off to the right of the PC but the GCP pre-empted his thunder by announcing a day before the MN did. If there's one thing Ben hates, it's people stealing the spotlight from him. And when the GCP came out with an aggressive (albeit funny) advert campaign [Advertgate], he started to lose it. When the PC (when we were both a part) had over 75 adverts, he didn't criticise them once. When the GCP came out with 60 adverts, he howled to high heaven. He knew he and Wes could never keep up with the output that Tomás and I were putting up.

Short answer: I stole Ben's thunder. I usurped his position as the topic of the day.

This is all a part of my book, BTW. Don't make decisions and judgments until you've read it.

REPOST: Godfrew Voldemort (or whatever), You got it wrong. (Witt X 15104)
posted by Retroradio Gruber on October 09, 2004 - 17:33.

A Tale of two Platforms

The Lytheria Codex, Volume III, Book 3, is the place to read the platforms for the Grey Congress Party and the Black Hand Party for the 31st Cosá Election, which was held from 15 December 2002 to 14 January 2003. There you will also see the Black Hand's platform. Ben Madison was the party leader, chief architect of the party's vision, and the other members allowed this. At the time, it didn't look sinister. Many of us, myself included, felt that the Black Hand had many positive things in store for the country. Indeed, until autumn of 2003, the Black Hand and Grey Congress never once wavered in their support of my Prime Ministry.



Weston J. "Wes" Ermi, ca. 1996

Even in the wake of the breakup of the Progressive Conservative Party, all still seemed well in Talossa, but the nation was soon plunged into...

Advertgate

An election "advert" is a computer graphic like this (Progressive Conservative Party, nicknamed 'Tories,' Cosá election 2002-2003):



Just a banner ad for display on web pages... That's all: just one example from among the scores and scores of banner ads from many political parties that had graced the Wittenberg stage over the years. The setup was to have a different advert in every screen view/refresh. Thus, the odds of your party's ad(s) showing up were in direct proportion to the number of ads you submitted to the advert rotation compared to all other political parties. Any political party could submit as many adverts as it liked; there was no limit. Such were the advert rules Secretary of State Marti-Páir Furxhéir set up for the 31st Ziu election, held from 15 December 2003 to 14 January 2004, and the Grey Congress immediately submitted no less than forty. The above example is one of thirty-two or so I submitted for the PC, in direct response to Ben Madison's reaction to the Greys' ad frenzy.

While the rest of Talossa gave kudos to the Greys, Ben came out accusing the Grey Congress of intentionally stuffing the ad rotation to marginalize the other parties. The ZPT soon echoed Ben's accusations. Of course, Chris was stunned at this, his Temper burst forth, and another flame war erupted. Yes, Ben and the ZPT were wrong, but let's take some things into account. Though it was later revealed Ben could have gotten as much help in doing ads from J.P. Griffin (who offered) and others, Ben probably did not believe he had that many options, and he probably believed Chris and Tomás knew it. Even so, Ben had once respected Chris enough to knight him in August of 2000. Why doubt his motivations now?

Of course, what really happened was that Gruber and Gariçéir simply got carried away. Everyone else realized this, because they knew the Greys well enough to figure it out. Everyone except Ben...

[Tomás:] > Honestly, it does seem sometimes that once you get an idea in your head, whether it is right or not, you just will not change your mind, ever. Like with "Advertgate" last election -- you never did say "well, sorry, I guess I was wrong about the GCP intentionally stuffing the advert queue with the goal of marginalising the other parties"; it's like that's your story and you're sticking with it, even though it was never true.

Tomás, you knew that by stuffing the rotation with 60 ads, you'd get ten times more exposure than any other party. That's all I said, and I stand by what I said.

-from **RE: Imaginary stuff** (Witt X 5765)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on November 09, 2003 - 13:55

This latest war [the fight over the Joint Statement] between Chris Gruber and Ben Madison is disgusting to me as was the adverts war of the previous election. In the previous election a year or so ago, the Grey Congress Party submitted sixty adverts to the Wittenberg advert rotation sincerely believing the rest of the parties (the PC, RCT, etc.) would do likewise as had been done in the past. Tomás and Chris in a single day simply had fun doing the adverts and by the time they came back to earth, they had made about forty. The other twenty, of course, came later. The Black Hand decided that this action was a blatant attempt by Chris and Tomás to deliberately sabotage the election advertising process by clogging Witt with Grey Congress ads when the simple fact was that all the other parties could have submitted the same number of adverts or more. Indeed, I myself submitted about thirty PC adverts, and Tori Spelling (what a cutie!) got her fifteen minutes of Talossan fame. I sided with Chris and Tomás, and it seemed to me that the Black Hand would see my logic. It did not.

-from **A Speech to the Nation to end all Speeches** (Witt X 5887),
posted by Jeff Válcadác'h on November 12, 2003 - 02:20

I have no idea what's going on with all this stuff that's going on (and I feel it's best for my own sanity to stay out of it), but Tori Spelling a cutie? If you'd said that a week earlier you would have been thrown out based on the VOC result :)

Gjermund "I don't know anything" Higriff

-from **RE: A Speech to the Nation to end all Speeches** (Witt X 5888),
posted by Gjermund Higriff on November 12, 2003 - 03:27

Gruber's reaction to Ben's accusation was fiery, but in fairness, his behavior that autumn must be viewed in the context of difficult events outside his Talossan life. No one but Grubi and Lisa Skovalia knew it at the time, but the chief subject of those events, what Chris called his "Great Personal Issue," had much to do with why Spring 2004 would go down as the darkest time in the history of Talossa.



12 July, 2003: From left: The King and the PM converse in front of Kenwood House in Abbavilla, while Tomás and Grubi do guard duty.

At the time, I summed matters up thus:

My Scribe of Abbavilla and my King (who knows more about Talossan law and about the Talossan archives than anyone else ever could) are getting more and more to the point of bitter hatred and I need them both!

-from 2003 Alpha Group members (good lord, what a dorky name), I beg you to calm down!

Posted By: PM Válcadác'h on: 01/02/2003 02:15:36 EST

Posted by: Jeff Válcadác'h

[PM JJR IX]

The flame war over Advertgate did not abate until the end of the election (14 January 2003), at which point I had a new problem. This one I'd created myself.

Gruber gets mad again

Gruber's anger in January 2003, just like in November 2002, was temperamental but justified. During the campaign for the Cosâ election, both Chris and I thought that the Grey Congress would get more votes than it did. Long before the end of the election, I told Chris that in the case of a coalition between the PC and GCP, I wanted him as my Deputy Prime Minister. As it happened, the PC and Black Hand (abbreviated with its Talossan-language initials: MN) got enough of a majority between them that they didn't need a third party for coalition. Under those circumstances, making a Grey Congress member DPM rather than an MN member wasn't in the cards. I figured Chris would understand without the need for us holding a conference.

I was wrong. Chris Gruber was angry because I did not include him in any discussions about the upcoming term, though *not* for not being made Deputy Prime Minister. I made my apologies to Chris, all was forgiven, and things were fine after that: Talossan politics at its relatively-civil best. Chris thought the remnants of the PC Pot Pie Blob were still a big, happy family and political brotherhood, even in its sundered state-that the friendships and camaraderie between all of us remained as they once were. No wonder he was angry with me! Ben called Chris's behavior "petulant," and another item was added to Ben's Gruber-Grudge file.



12 July, 2003: Gary Cone (holding the camera), the King, and Tomás during the filming of "Talossa: the Movie"

The end of the united Progressive Conservative Party caused my own feathers to be a little bit ruffled. My administration hadn't lost any Cosâ seats due to the breakup, but I hadn't seen the party's fragmentation coming, though I should have. I had been oblivious to the hints of fracture lines in the PC from Chris and Ben. The future of my administration, beyond the next election, was in doubt. I was still enthusiastic about serving, and possibly someday breaking Michael Pope's three-year tenure record of continuous Prime Ministry (though at that time I hadn't finished my first year). I did not, nor do I today, believe I was in any way, shape, or form "backstabbed" by anyone. Indeed, until the Halloween Crisis, the support for my administration from the Grey Congress and the Black Hand could not have been more exemplary.

But something else was going on. I was just beginning to get a hint of Ben Madison's grudge-holding capacity. In the tense negotiations for the 31st Cosâ, in reply to a statement of mine, my PC brethren told me, in effect: "Don't go with the Greys and not the MN. Ben will be your enemy forever if you do. He will never, NEVER forgive you." I had no plans to snub the MN in a coalition just to curry favor with Chris, but I stood duly-cautioned. I also felt at the time that Chris was making a mountain out of a molehill. For the first time I felt the heat of the Temper of Gruber directed at me, and it was no fun, but I was also getting my first sense of the Wrath of Ben.

The Válcadác'h Coalition

Chris Gruber once said that my term "Válcadác'h Coalition" (for the partnership of the Progressive Conservatives, Black Hand, and Grey Congress) was a bit egotistical on my part. I had not meant it as an ego trip; I chose it because I was in a hurry to name our group, and couldn't think of a better one. My other idea, "Stouffer's Coalition," (Stouffer's being the company that makes TV dinners, among them being several varieties of pot-pies) sounded corny to me and didn't get much support. In hindsight, I think using that name would have been smack-dab in the grand tradition of Talossan humor, but at the time I concluded that it would have given a false impression: that the PC was somehow still the monolithic entity it had been.

On 15 January 2003, the tense negotiations were still underway. The King granted my appeal for a Warrant of Prorogation, which gave the incoming government one extra month to get its house in order, though this cost the new term of government one Clark. It was the first Warrant of Prorogation in at least three years. The negotiations concluded on 22 January. Chris had forgiven me, and I issued a Prime Dictate birthing the Válcadác'h Coalition, with Quedéir Castiglhá of the Black Hand as my Deputy Prime Minister and Chris Gruber in his traditional role as Minister of Propaganda. The tumultuous breakup of the PC and the most interesting Talossan autumn since 1997 had come to a close. Though it was a new political landscape, the old PC "Blob" was still more or less together and governing as before. The Opposition could only gnash its teeth in chagrined frustration.

One other thing from this time deserves mention. Quedéir Castiglhá had been an inactive citizen for a number of years and a long-time Opposition "pocket" vote. But in late 2002 or 2003, Ben reached out to him and got him back and into a new level of Talossan activity, and, for a happy change, Quedéir was energetically involved in mainstream Talossan society. He would eventually become an unwittingly-central figure in what was to come and in a fashion even Hollywood could not script. "Q" was a bright new star in Talossan politics, and the lustre of his friendship, kindness, civility, and patriotism shine even to this day.

The new coalition was born, alive, and thriving. One would think this would be the end of the story. But there was something in Ben's behavior in Advertgate that, in retrospect, bothers me: no humor. A sense of humour, even in the worst of times, had long been a constant of Talossan history--even in the dark days of Davron and "fecal logs". The lack of this quirky and quintessentially-Talossan humor and the laughter that came with it was partly what made the coming Halloween Crisis so bitter for all of us. Indeed, the whole thing was downright depressing. At least in the by-gone days of Andrew Wozniak, people could snigger about "birds, bugs, and fish"!

But there was something brewing that was deeper than just a political flap. It was deeper than even Ben or anyone else realized. On the surface, it was his growing hatred toward Chris Gruber. But it was more: the beginning of the long and agonizing exit, by many of us, from the cult of tolerance that had come to surround Ben Madison.

A Nation Sundered

Part Two: Halloween

by

Gödafríeu Válcadác'h

*Signatory of the Compact of 19 May, 2004 and a Founding Parent of the Republic of Talossa
Twenty-sixth and Twenty-ninth Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Talossa*



*From left to right: Chris Gruber, Tomás Gariçéir, Gödafríeu Válcadác'h,
and Ben Madison standing in Abbavilla on 12 July, 2003*

The War debate

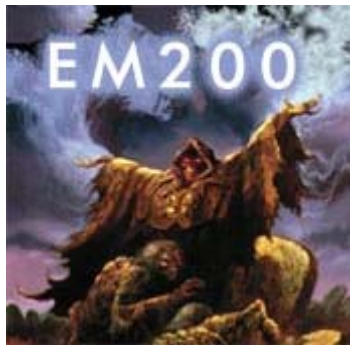
In the first part of 2003, what would become the War in Iraq still loomed. It was during this time that Chris Gruber spoke out on Wittenberg against the policies of U. S. President George W. Bush in regard to Iraq. I, Ben, Michael Pope, Ián Metáiriá and others favoured a war to oust Saddam Hussein. Chris also wanted Hussein out, but he did not believe going to war was the answer.

Gruber's position can be summarized: "Anti-war=Anti-Saddam=Pro-troops." Ben, though, felt that to be anti-war was to be Pro-Saddam=Anti-troops. The King hammered on the point with Gruber. Mentions of Saddam's rape rooms, repression, and torture schemes didn't exactly calm the atmosphere. As the war debate went on, relations between the two grew no more cordial.

Yet everyone in Talossa found a way to get along with Chris Gruber once again.

Everyone except Ben...

EM200



A graphic created by J. P. Griffin and used by the Talossan Coalition against EM200 in spring, 2003.

Short for "Erni-Madison 200-seat Cosâ", EM200 (a term coined by Chris Gruber) was the cornerstone of the MN's vision for Talossa: returning the Regipäts to what it had been before the dawn of the Cybercit Era in 1996. Volume III, Book 5 of the Lytheria Codex is an excellent resource for a bit of what the debate on EM200 was like.

Under the 1988 Constitution, the Kingdom's legislature was unicameral in the form of a 215-seat Cosâ, 200 of those seats being divided in direct proportion to the results of the general election. The twist was that a single person could hold up to thirty seats at once, thereby allowing political parties a great deal of latitude in distributing votes to loyal supporters and members. For example, if the Talossan National Party received 80 seats in an election, it could give thirty seats each to two party stalwarts, giving to each of them one-seventh of the Cosâ vote! Fifteen seats could go to someone who had been in the party for a little while, and the rest could be handed out to newbies and members perceived to be less-reliable. This minimized the impact of loose cannons, haphazard voters, and the like. This distribution of seats is akin to the distribution of "points" to various attributes of a character in the venerable fantasy role-playing board game *Dungeons & Dragons*, thereby giving the 215-seat system the "D&D Talossa" moniker.

When there weren't many active citizens, D&D Talossa made sense. It also gave political parties a great deal of latitude in rewarding party loyalists. In addition to whatever seats he might have been holding, the Prime Minister received an extra ten seats and the Deputy Prime Minister another five, thus constituting a 215-seat Cosâ.

With the demise of the 1988 Constitution and the advent of the Organic Law in 1997, there came an end to the 215-seat system. This 215-seat system was replaced by a one-man=one-vote Cosâ of 20 seats: the "Real" Cosâ. Ben and others saw this new Cosâ setup as an evolution in Talossan governance, taking into account the increase in immigration that happened once the Kingdom went online in 1996 and the assumption that the rate of incoming new citizens would stay pretty-much the same, considering the post-1996 immigration boom and the Kingdom's growth trend.

The 20-seat Cosâ worked well, but it required twenty warm bodies to make it work. The falling-off in immigration after 2000 as well as the Penguineans' departure in 1997 and that of the Liberals almost four years later were the key factors in the system breaking down. For a long, long-time "ghost" Cosâ members such as Harry and Jennifer Madison with their dubious interest and participation in Talossa stayed on for years when under the 215-seat body, they would have never cast a shadow over the chamber door and you will understand why when the Black Hand rose from the mists of time in December, 2002, the party had EM200 as the centrepiece of its Platform.

There were other considerations. Under the 20-seat Cosâ, each seat was equivalent to 5% of the vote. Therefore, if a party gained 48.0% and had a plurality, it could control ten seats, fully-half of the Cosâ, yet it had not gotten half the votes. However, under the old 215-seat system, that party would have gotten 96 seats, each seat being the equivalent of but .5% of the vote, but if that party was the governing political party in a coalition, it could get at least ten extra seats (for the Prime Minister, giving it nearly an absolute majority). Ben pointed out all these reasons to us, and to me, they made very good sense.

Enter EM200... Under the new proposed system, the extra 15 seats for the PM and DPM would not be making a comeback, but a new wrinkle, not ever seen before in Talossa, would be added to the mix: provincial apportionment of Cosâ seats.

Under EM200 and on the start of the first day of each election, a census would be taken of each province with Dandelions included in the count. The 200 seats would be distributed proportionally among each of the provinces. If, for example, Vuode had 11 of, say, the 55 people in the Regipäts, it would get twenty percent of the 200 seats, or 40. These 40 seats would be divided proportionally according to the voting result in that province. For example, if Vuode had 40 seats and the MN received 6 of 8 votes in Vuode, it would receive 30 of Vuode's 40 seats.

Let's take a look at the election for the 32nd Ziu that concluded on 14 October, 2003 (archived from the Talossan Database System):

Party	Atatürk		Cézembre		Florençiâ		Maricopa		Maritiimi-Maxhestic		Mussolini		Vuode		Total	
GCP	2	12.35	1	4.94			1	7.41	3	15.56			1	8.02	8	48.27
MN	3	18.52	2	9.88	2	9.88	1	7.41			2	9.88	5	40.12	15	95.68
PC	1	6.17			4	19.75	1	7.41	2	10.37	1	4.94			9	48.64
ZPT							1	7.41							1	7.41
Total	6	37.04	3	14.81	6	29.63	4	29.63	5	25.93	3	14.81	6	48.15	33	198+2

A careful look at the totals and party distribution of votes for each province shows a sinister side to EM200. Look at the lopsided victory for the MN in Vuode. Low voter turnout combined with lopsided MN support helped this party carry the day in the vote-richest province of them all. And look at the solid performance for the MN in Cézembre, thanks to sincerely loyal Ben voters. Ditto for Mussolini. Atatürk and Maricopa were inconclusive. But only in Florençiâ and Maritiimi-Maxhestic was there significant support for non-MN parties. Take a look at the vote numbers. Under the old "D&D" system, the MN would have gotten 45.45% of the vote which would have translated into 91 (90.90, to be exact) seats, five less than what they actually got.

There was also the spectre of Ben abdicating and becoming a private citizen, thereby allowing him to get into the Senäts. Of course, with the low population Talossa had even at this time, "doubling-up", or people serving in both chambers of the Ziu because of there not being enough warm bodies to fill the 27 seats in the Cosâ and Senäts was a common happening. Imagine Senator Ben Madison holding one-seventh of the voting strength of both Cosâ and Senäts as well as at least five guaranteed "pocket" votes: himself, Jean Williams, Amy, Harry, and Jennifer. He would have more power than he had held since he democratized the country in the early-to-mid 1980s.

However, with EM200, an even-darker spectre presented itself: a Monarch holding thirty Cosâ seats in a vote to override his veto of a bill. This was something I had thought of, but dismissed until Art Verbotten, independently of me, brought it

up. Citizen Verbotten was the one to raise this issue, and only the Verbotten-Madison Compromise--in which the King surrendered his right to vote on veto overrides--made EM200 palatable to Verbotten and other EM200 critics, thereby paving the way for the bill's easy passage at the 12 July 2003 Living Cosâ. As if the spectre of the Monarch holding not only veto power over bills, but a potential voting strength of more than one-seventh of the Cosâ wasn't enough, add Senator Amy Durnford from Vuode, and you have a recipe for trouble. Yet, consider what time this was: early-to-mid 2003. This was before the PC and Grey Congress became the targets of the Wrath of Ben. For "Loyal" Talossan citizens, July 2003 was the best of times. And the chance of EM200 bringing a bit of nostalgia and new excitement to an otherwise-boring and stagnant electoral system was too good to pass up.

Marti-Páir and "Real Life"

In April and May 2003, Marti-Páir's business affairs took a welcome, but hectic upsurge. He was almost two weeks late publishing the May 2003 Clark. Finally, on 12 May, I stepped in and took over the Clark. I helped Marti-Páir with Secretary of State duties throughout the summer, including the Clark for the upcoming Living Cosâ. It was at that time that I started to burn out on the PM's office—and came to realize just how big the SoS' job was.

But even all of this was supplanted by the new *topic du jour*.

TalossaFest 2003



Brook Glälfke (at left) and Andy Lowry discuss Jazzercise at TalossaFest - 12 July, 2003



*Outside of Vuode Palace on Sunday evening, 13 July, 2003
just before Grubi and Lisa start the long trip back home
The leaders of a Talossa that no longer exists, shaking hands for the last time.
From left, we have then-Prime Minister Válcadác'h, Tomás Gariçéir, Ben, and Chris.
The photo was probably taken by Lisa Skovalia, but Art Verbotten may also have been the photographer.*

TalossaFest and its centerpiece, the Living Cosâ, were held on Saturday, 12 July 2003. As we sat around the table at Lytheria eating couscous, talking Talossa, and eating Verbotten's delicious barbeque, who of us and who of us not present physically but certainly present in spirit could have dreamed this would be the last hurrah of the Talossa we had known? Chris Gruber and Lisa Skovalia, his Significant Other, were ecstatic about coming to Talossan soil for the first time; indeed, despite some awkward moments that weekend, it turned into the best vacation either of them ever had.

Ben had long desired to abdicate the kingship. The evening before TalossaFest, but *after* the clash with Amy which I will deal with shortly, Ben told Chris something shocking: were Ben to abdicate, he would choose Grubi as his successor! Chris told me this over the telephone sometime in autumn 2003. It would seem that Ben had forgiven Chris for everything. Apparently he hadn't forgotten their friendship, and how much Gruber had done to rejuvenate the country after the tumultuous days of late 1997 to early 1998.

Or had he? Robert I may have had other motives. The King of Talossa was forbidden to serve on the Uppermost Cort or Senâts. After abdicating, private citizen Ben Madison would be free to become an open political heavyweight. The Senate seat of Vuode would probably be his for the taking, and Chris could be cajoled in nominating him for the Uppermost Cort. As a Cort Justice, he would have veto power over prospective citizens, plus control of one-seventh of the Ziu's upper house. Due to the 1997 Organic Law's exception to multiple-office holding in the case of too few warm bodies, he could also sit in the Cosâ. He would be more powerful than he had been as King since before he instituted democratic reforms in the early-to-mid 1980's. He had even hinted at being in a similar position on Wittenberg VI, back in 2000 or 2001.

Let's stand back for a moment and ponder the exact nature of what went down when Chris Gruber met the Royals for the first time.

With all due respect, he's behaving like a paranoid nutcase, trying to cover his tracks, belligerently wailing at people that didn't do anything wrong, and revealing himself to be a total jerk--something that Amy and I learned through sad experience during his visit here last year, when (among other things) he barged into my wife's living room and ordered her to get off the couch during a Brewers game so he could watch Talossan videos. ("You don't tell me what to do in my own house," my wife said. "Well, they're going to lose anyway," Grubi replied with a snarl. What an asshole!)

-from **RE: Imaginary stuff (Witt X 5762)**, posted by **[R. Ben Madison]**
on November 09, 2003 - 10:50.

Lisa Skovalia responded:

With all due respect, I don't think he's the only one.
But I do think we're getting to the heart of the matter here. Apparently, Chris offended you guys at TalossaFest and the psychic wound has been festering ever since. It is extremely unfortunate that Chris does have a way of pissing people off when he truly doesn't mean to. I know, as I been one of those people as have many of my friends. It also unfortunate that it takes people some time to "get" his sense of humor, and sometimes people just don't. The fact is though, that if you really get to know Chris, you'll realize that 95% of the time Chris is just a wise-cracking joker. He's just being silly and there really is no malintent, but it often gets misconstrued because, as I said, people aren't familiar with or can't understand his sense of humor. I honestly believe that's what happened that day with Amy at the house. He was "goofing" in his usual Chris style, but she took him seriously (understandably) because she didn't know him. I just wish you guys would have said something about it at TalossaFest, so there could have been an opportunity to clear the air in person. I think we (Chris and I) both assumed you guys knew he was joking because you didn't act weird or upset about anything after the fact. Now that it's clear that things were not cool afterall, I think this may be the foremost issue that needs to be addressed. Obviously, you and Amy are not obliged to like Chris. But, if you have a problem with something he did, at least let him know so he has a chance to make things right. Believe me, if you don't tell him, he won't know he did something wrong, because he's really not trying to do anything wrong. Then if he doesn't apologize or explain himself, fine...he's being an asshole and I'll be the first to say so!

-from **RE: Imaginary stuff (Witt X 5776)**, posted by **Lisa Skovalia**
on November 09, 2003 - 23:15.

Anyone who knows Chris Gruber well knows his acidic sense of humor. And when Lisa Skovalia talks about Chris' coming off as mean and insulting when he is actually just kidding around, I believe her. Chris' is a certain type of humor not everyone gets. This kind of humor was something the Royals could not fathom, and when Chris, in his ecstatic excitement and joy at being on Talossan soil for the first time, got into his humor mode, it came off as impolite, and, of course, the Royals were not happy.

Granted, Chris should have toned it down for people who had never seen him in person before. But I now believe since he regarded Ben and Amy as family, he thought they would feel the same way about them, and that the formality one uses for strangers was not necessary at this moment. Chris felt right at home.

It was a personality clash, plain and simple, and a bad one at that.



Amy Durnford and Ben Madison sometime in 2000 and Chris Gruber at Kinko's in Milwaukee on 13 July 2003



11 July, 2003: Ben (at left), Tomás (middle), and Chris Gruber stand in front of Vuode Palace.

[Andy Lowry:]> We don't all have to agree on everything, obviously-- what would be the fun in that? But to allow the conversation and debate to degenerate into playground-style namecalling is simply beneath us all. I was especially shocked by Amy's uncalled-for and uncited insults.

OK, let me explain. Amy met Chris on two occasions. One was a pre-TalossaFest lunch date with a bunch of us at a Greek restaurant in Mussolini Province. Gruber kept interrupting her, putting her down, generally giving us all the impression that because Amy was a woman she didn't deserve to speak. Later on, after one of many times when Gruber failed to keep an appointment, he showed up late at our house where Amy was watching the Brewers play on TV. Gruber literally marched into the room, and ORDERED her to get off the couch so he could watch Talossa videos. When she refused, his reply was "Well, they're going to lose anyway."

That sort of behaviour, in person, towards the woman I love, is disgusting and appalling. The man has no respect for other people. That disqualifies him [from being PM].

-from **RE: Immigration Minister Andy Lowry?** (Witt X 5962),
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on November 12, 2003 - 21:02

Nothing about Ben revising his account of events? You [Gödafríeu Válcadác'h] are aware Ben had no problem with me WHILE I WAS THERE, right? Think about this: if he had a significant problem with me, why would he try to hand off the throne to me in a conversation that took place AFTER the clash with Amy?

-from Chris Gruber's proofreading notes



*PM Válcadác'h at the Living Cosá, 12 July, 2003
Reflected in the mirror are Andy Lowry (at left), Ben (middle), and Ián Metáiriá*

2003 was just not a good year for the Válcadác'hster.

From 19 September until 4 November 2003, financial difficulties put my second phone line out of service. I visited Witt sporadically, not wishing to tie up my father's phone line, and not at all from 1-4 November. I was extremely embarrassed and did not want anyone in Talossa to know. As a result, I fumbled the Talossan political football at midfield: I told no one, not even my Deputy Prime Minister Castighlâ, whom I should have made Acting PM until things could get worked out.

[M-P Furxhéir:] > The WHOLE election has Gödafriëu for PM, he WON the election, since 3 parties backed him up.

And, frankly, that was Gödafriëu's fault--he ran an election as head of a three-party coalition that supported him, *all the while knowing* that he was "burned out" and that he was going to resign during the upcoming term. Gödafriëu (and I think he acknowledged this) should have said so BEFORE the election. You're right--Gödafriëu got 96% of the vote! But that doesn't mean that Gruber has the right to inherit his mantle against the will of the largest party and the majority in the Cosá.

-from **RE: Hacking (Witt X 6011)**

posted by [R. Ben Madison] on November 13, 2003 - 10:42

I wanted to give the Kingdom as much time as possible to find a successor, so I decided not to resign until around New Year's Eve. My financial troubles dovetailed with my burnout to the point where I stopped caring about Talossa. Courtesy to my father was a convenient, impeccable reason to avoid reading my e-mail, checking Witt, or even logging onto the Internet. Had I known what was going down, the Halloween Crisis might have ended differently. Or perhaps not... By 5 November, matters were arguably beyond any human being's damage-control skills.

The explanation for my absence from Witt recently is very simple, stupid, and embarrassing. The financial woes which hit me this summer (Metáiriá knows a little of this) caused me to not have my second phone line which I have used to log onto the internet as well as make my many phone calls to Talossans. As of yesterday evening, this situation was remedied, thereby allowing me to fully undertake my duties as PM once more. I am living with my dad at the moment, and have had no desire to tie his phone line up with Talossan things.

Yes, I should have let all of you know long before this; perhaps Quedéir could have taken up duties in an Acting position for a time. Clearly I have mis-handled the situation.

-from **Response from the Prime Minister's office** (Witt X 5531)
posted by Gödafriëu Válcadác'h on November 05, 2003 - 11:26

"F--k America", Advertgate, the negotiations for the 31st Cosâ, the Iraq War debates, and the festering memory of the strife (still not general public knowledge) at TalossaFest... They all added up to Ben's growing animosity toward Chris Gruber. Here is what I had to say about it in April 2004:

[Gödafriëu:]> > While Amy's abuser really *did* abuse her, you have not convinced anyone outside of your family of Chris' having done the same thing. Sorry.

>

[Ben:]> You don't believe it, so I guess that proves it. The reason you don't believe it is not because it hasn't been proven, but because you are psychologically incapable of admitting to yourself and to the rest of us that you made the wrong decision last fall in choosing him as your PM candidate.

I have thought about that and have come to the conclusion that the only reason he was decisive was because you and Amy did not get along with him last summer and that you are still, because of the genuine loyalty of those who willingly vote for whomever you say, the most-potent voting force in Talossa and that you *chose* for whatever reasons to *make* him decisive.

If I had done what was appropriate at the time, I would have made Q the acting Prime Minister while I was having phone-line problems last September and October. Instead, I tried to hold on with my own hands and inadvertently set off the Amy-Ben-Gruber bomb by providing a reason for the two of you to have to work together (the Joint Statement), thereby providing an opportunity for something, *anything* to go wrong, thereby provoking the two of you to wrath.

Had Q been allowed to take up the reins for a while, I could have gotten my bearings again, resumed the government, and perhaps stayed in office for longer than I did. Many things could have been avoided had I done things differently, but your inability to offer any sort of "grace" or whatever when Tomas and Chris withdrew from the Joint Statement combined with Gruber's temper have brought our nationette to the glorious state it is now in.

While I have admitted more than once my mistakes, don't lay this all at my doorstep. Ever since your denseness with the 2002 Adverts crisis as well as Gruber's classic line "Fuck America", the two you have not gotten along. But once you and Amy and Chris met in person, the huge pile of black powder was set, and if the Halloween Crisis had not come about to make the powder [sic] explode, something else at some other time would have. It was only a matter of [sic] time.

-from **RE: Death threats** (Witt X 9970), posted by Gödafriëu Válcadác'h
on April 11, 2004 - 17:43.

Halloween begins

Oh, my...

Dear friends and readers, it would take at least fifty pages to fully describe the events of 25 October through 5 November 2003. Imagine the biggest email/Wittenberg/phone free-for-all in Talossan history and throw in a tangled, jumbled web of miscommunications, flames, and general confusion. Someday, someone will provide a blow-by-blow analysis of what all went on: who emailed/called/spoke to/cajoled whom, when and why. More power to 'em!

“The Halloween Crisis” is a term coined by Ben Madison for a sequence of crises occurring from 19 October to 28 November 2003. Their common thread was my recent flakiness on duty as PM and my impending resignation. First came the confusion resulting from my decision to resign, then the resulting search for a successor. Through the Joint Statement, the coalition partners had tried to get the message through to me, but it did not register with me until it was too late. Then there was “Seatgate”: a series of honest errors in judgment by SoS Furxhéir, that ended up being forgiven by Gary Cone of the ZPT (Witt X 9220), the de-facto leader of the political party most-affected. Had Seatgate never happened, everything else connected with Halloween and 2004 would have gone right ahead, but it surely added to the tension of the times. The hottest portion of the Crisis was from 25 October 2003 until 12 November. It ended with the King’s public announcement of the terms of the Noodles Summit on 28 November 2003.

In the weeks following TalossaFest 2003, I made my decision to resign. I felt a duty to first inform my earliest and strongest supporters, and during the second week of July, I phoned Michael Pope. About a week or two later I spoke with Ián Metáiriá. After that, I informed the whole PC. We decided to get as much of a Cosâ majority as possible in the next election, then advise the Coalition of my intentions. While this alienated the Coalition, we acted thus out of concern of the growing influence of the Black Hand. A supposedly ‘niche’ political party, the MN was full of Ben supporters who had long been certain to vote for whichever party Ben endorsed.

For years, that party was the PC. The first PC/MN breach of faith came during the early 2003 Mussolini Senate election, which put Tom Buffone in the stead of the long-serving Matthias Muth. Some PC members felt that the Creator of Talossa was scheming to keep his creation from getting away from him and to maintain control of Talossa EM200 certainly helped that cause, allowing Ben to put more voting power in the hands of his small hand-picked cadre.

Who would succeed me?

The election for the 31st Ziu ended on 14 October (see above graphic) with the MN being five seats short of an outright majority in Cosâ. The PC, barely in second place, was not the governing party for the first time in over ten years. Even so, the MN had decided to support my continuing on as Prime Minister. When the story of my decision to resign broke on 23 October, before I was able to put together a proper public announcement, the fun began. My logical first choice was DPM Quedéir Castiglâ of the MN, who declined because of his horrendous college schedule. In his stead, the MN proposed an unexpected candidate: Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau. Maxime had a checkered history of jumping from one political party to another; he had been a PC member until he left over some anti-Semitic remarks, and his hostility to Israel made him unacceptable to the PC now. The Tories soundly rejected him.

The MN had a problem. The bulk of active Talossans, including the most qualified candidates for the Prime Ministry, were in the PC and the Grey Congress. The PC invited the MN to nominate someone else; they proposed Amy Durnford, whose inactivity and negative attitude toward the Kingdom were well-known. There was also the small matter of her being the Queen, which—while allowable under the Organic Law—was unacceptable to the PC. Finally, the MN offered up Wes Erni, who would have been perfectly acceptable except he had no computer and no Internet access. How would he communicate directly with most Talossans while remaining ‘Amish,’ as we Talossans refer to this condition? The PC rejected him, citing his Amishness and lack of visible Talossan activity.

““Our logical choice is Wes [Erni] if he wants it,” Castiglâ noted. However, Erni, still the party’s titular President, has no reliable access to the Internet and could not really be expected to shoulder the day-to-day management of the Coalition government.””

- from “MN, 4 seats short of majority, proposes Charbonneau for Seneschál
as [Válcadác’h] announces impending resignation”

By R. Ben Madison, Stótanneu Staff ~ Vuode, 23 October 2003/XXIV
Stótanneu Volüm XXVI, Númerul 951: Listopäts, 2003 [October, 2003]

Tomás Gariçéir and Andy Lowry were discussed by the PC and GCP as possible replacements, but both declined. At the time, I didn't see the hidden message: the most levelheaded Talossans wanted no part of my job. The GCP/PC caucus eventually selected Chris Gruber as my would-be successor. But the MN rejected him. Still oblivious to Ben's festering dislike for Chris (though not for much longer), I was floored.

I did not return to Wittenberg until 5 November, by which time matters were spinning out of control. I wasn't even quite sure what had happened.

The government which I have recently appointed [by way of the 25 October, 2003 PD] is an exact replication of the government from the last term and was appointed and formed quickly and haphazardly to get something in order in time for the first Clark. I see now that was a silly mistake on my part not to let everyone know from the get-go that it was my reason and intent. We did not have a DPM candidate we could all agree on yet, and I needed to do something. I felt that I could not take time to ask for input from the members of our Coalition, but I am also a procrastinator. The makeup of the previous government was one to which we had all assented, [in the negotiations for the *previous* Cosâ] and I thought I could act as I did without need of input. :-(

-from **Response from the Prime Minister's office** (Witt X 5531)
posted by Gödafrieu Válcadác'h on November 05, 2003 - 11:26

From 19 October until 11 November, 2003, I had three different Cabinets. From 19-25 October, I held over the Cabinet from the previous Cosâ term. In hindsight, I now realize many governmental decisions I made during this period of time turned out badly, and I was about to make another doozy.

On the night of 25 October, and I somehow got it into my head that I needed to appoint a Cabinet right then to get a government in place in time for the Clark (which would not be published, of course, until 1 November. Then I thought, "I won't have time to ask people to be in my Cabinet -- Hmm... -- Let's use the Cabinet from last term, and then I can appoint the "real" one in a few days, but at least we will have a government in place in time for the Clark."

And on 25 October, I appointed a Cabinet with the exact same composition as the one for the previous legislative term, with Quedéir Castiglhá as DPM. Of course, this caused rampant confusion throughout the country as to my successor, given that Quedéir had already declined the PM's job, and this was a catalyst for what was to come. A good number of people saw this Cabinet as high-handed and unilateral. Indeed, even the PC had no input since this was an impulse move on my part! This Prime Dictate was the direct provocation for the Black Hand and Grey Congress' deciding to work together on the infamous...

Joint Statement

“A REAL COALITION”

To the King, the Prime Minister, all Talossan media, and the people of Talossa:

On 14 October 2003/XXIV, the voters in a free and fair Talossan election gave 96 seats to the MN, 48 to the PCG, and 49 to the Progressive Conservative Party (PC). All three parties contested the election together, under the common banner of “The[Válcadác’h] Coalition.” And between them, the three parties won approximately 96% of the vote.

On 19 October 2003/XXIV, Prime Minister Gödafriëu Válcadác’h announced that he intended to resign as Prime Minister. As the MN had won a large plurality of the Coalition Government’s seats (96 out of 193), the Prime Minister instructed the MN to designate a Deputy Prime Minister to serve in the Government and to take over as Prime Minister upon the resignation of Mr [Válcadác’h]. “It is my belief that the Deputy PMship can justifiably come from no other party save the Black Hand,” the Prime Minister correctly observed.

On 23 October 2003/XXIV, the MN dutifully nominated MC Maxime Paquin- Charbonneau (MN-Atatürk) to serve as Deputy Prime Minister. This nomination of a long-standing Member of the Cosâ, Opposition Leader, Senator, and founding member of the former RCT (one of the Kingdom of Talossa’s most successful political parties), was met by silence from the Prime Minister’s Office.

The Prime Minister’s Office refused to comment publicly. Numerous e-mails to the Prime Minister’s Office went unanswered. And it was immediately apparent that the only response from the Prime Minister’s Office was a number of secret, clandestine attempts to sow distrust and divide the coalition. On various occasions since the election, the MN has been asked to make secret deals against the PCG, and the PCG has been asked to make secret deals against the MN.

The Prime Minister’s Office has made cabinet appointments (such as the Deputy Prime Minister and Immigration Minister) an issue of great fog and secrecy, with offers being made to individuals without the knowledge of the various Coalition parties, treating the MN and PCG as minor adjuncts to the “true” governing party, the PC. This sort of divide-and-rule strategy not only indicates, but engenders, distrust.

We, the members of the MN, wish to state publicly through this Statement that we seek only to participate in a Real Coalition for the government of the Kingdom of Talossa. In a Real Coalition there is no room for secret plots, back-stabbing, double-dealing, and double-crosses. It is our hope that we can jointly govern Talossa in a Real Coalition with the PC, MN, and PCG all serving together as equal brother parties.

In order to pursue a Real Coalition, however, the Prime Minister’s Office must first accept that the PC won only 49 seats out of 200. It is not the majority party; it is not even a plurality party. It is a junior member of a Coalition Government. Decisions affecting the entire Government are not to be made within the closed-door caucus of the PC without our knowledge, and then imposed upon the rest of us without our consent.

Accordingly, we propose that no day-to-day decision be taken in this Coalition Government without the fullest opportunity of each party to consider that decision, and that each party in the Coalition Government shall have equal say in the decision. Each party must be fully informed of the plans of the Government, and each party should assume a separate but equal status, so that each party—the MN, the PC, and the PCG— shall have one single, equal vote in all collective decision-making, and that the majority position shall always prevail.

In the event that the Prime Minister’s Office chooses to treat the MN and the PCG with distrust and contempt, and continues to attempt to isolate and divide them, the MN hereby resolves, publicly, with no shadow of secrecy or attempt at deception, that we shall do what we can under the Organic Law to organize a Real Coalition Government for the Kingdom of Talossa without the participation of the Progressive Conservative Party.

Sincerely,

Deputy Prime Minister Quedéir Castiglhá, M.C. (MN-Florencia)

Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau, M.C. (MN-Florencia)

R. Mark Hamilton, M.C. (MN-Atatürk)

R. Ben Madison, M.C. (MN-Vuode)

The Joint Statement was published on 3 November in Stötanneu (Lytheria 3.1), Ben Madison’s newspaper of record, founded on the same day as the Regipäts, and was publicized on Wittenberg.

This Wittenberg posts announces the publication of the Joint Statement.

Read it here. [link to <http://www.talossa.com/stot/> -- This has been archived in _____]

Tomás Gariçéir

Speak Talossan. Vote GCP. Be happy.

Støtanneu: MN issues ultimatum to PC (Witt X 5496)
posted by [Tomás Gariçéir] on November 03, 2003 - 16:29

And here is Ben's reaction. I have said earlier that the Halloween Crisis began back in late October. But it was at this post from 3 November that everything became a "crisis".

Azul,

Thanks for posting the letter!

To whom it may concern: This letter was originally written, and approved, as a "Joint Declaration" between the MN and the Grey Congress.

As the Støtanneu story says, the Grey Congress then 'unsigned' their signatures and withdrew their support from the document.

This sort of duplicity and back-stabbing is unbecoming of a Talossan political party, and we in the Black Hand have absolutely no intention of participating in such absurd and peevish shenanigans.

As I head out to Taco Bell to confer with Wes Erni and [Ián Metáiriá], the 5:00 (or is it 5:30?) p.m. deadline looms in a couple of hours. Expect to see a PC-Grey Congress coalition formed at that time, as the Greys will say or do anything in order to fulfil their ambitions--whether it is knifing the PC in the back to support Maxime Charbonneau for PM, or knifing the MN in the back to oppose him.

The MN will, of necessity, form the Official Opposition to this new government.

Or else, something else might happen. You never know.

Ben

RE: Støbbbed in the back! (Witt X 5497)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on November 03, 2003 - 16:35



Tomas Gariçéir at Kinko's in Milwaukee on 13 July 2003

[RBM:] > the Greys will say or do anything in order to fulfil their ambitions--**whether it is knifing the PC in the back to support Maxime Charbonneau for PM, or knifing the MN in the back to oppose him.** [emphasis mine - TG]

As a matter of fact, that is exactly the situation the GCP found itself in! So I personally made the other choice, namely walking away and not knifing anyone in the back. And I don't really see how that can be construed as "saying or doing anything in order to fulfill our ambitions" (much less being "completely craven and desperate for power" as you so eloquently, er, erroneously put it in another post below).

Oh, and for what its worth, when a PM candidate is so divisive that his candidacy drives a huge wedge among members of a coalition who are supposed to be working together, and supporting or opposing him for PM becomes stabbing one or the other of one's coalition partners in the back, then maybe - just maybe - it's time to take a step back and say "well, maybe he's not the best guy for the job after all" and try to find somebody else that everyone can agree on. (That is what being a member of a coalition is all about.) Just a thought.

Tomás Gariçéir

RE: Støp it (Witt X 5507)

posted by [Tomás Gariçéir] on November 03, 2003 - 20:20

> This sort of duplicity and back-stabbing is unbecoming of a Talossan political party, and we in the Black Hand have absolutely no intention of participating in such absurd and peevish shenanigans.

THAT is an out-and-out lie.

> As I head out to Taco Bell to confer with Wes Erni and [Ián Metáiriá], the 5:00 (or is it 5:30?) p.m. deadline looms in a couple of hours. Expect to see a PC-Grey Congress coalition formed at that time, as the Greys will say or do anything in order to fulfil their ambitions--whether it is knifing the PC in the back to support Maxime Charbonneau for PM, or knifing the MN in the back to oppose him.

Who says we're going to be a part of anything?

> The MN will, of necessity, form the Official Opposition to this new government.

You have no proof we ever did anything "desperate for power". You acted like a child when an offer was made, and you threw a fit - so we said, Do Whatever.

VOTE FOR The Grey Congress Party/El Parti del Congreßeu Grischún and stop feeling guilty.
Speak Talossan. Vote GCP. Be happy.

Please. (Witt X 5500)

posted by Chirisch Cavéir on November 03, 2003 - 16:46.

After the Joint Statement itself, the article in Støtanneu in which the Statement was published has this paragraph: "The Grey Congress Party had originally signed the statement jointly with the Black Hand, but on the morning of 3 November, GCP Party President Chris Gruber decided officially to withdraw the names of his party's members from the document." I was so out of touch with Talossa that it was not until I made my return two days later that I got wind of this document.

This will take some time, but we need to get into the nitty-gritty detail of this, for it lies at the heart of a lot of what went on.

Late summer and early autumn, 2003 had yet another thing going on: calls from certain quarters for Uppermost Cort Justices Matthias Muth and Chên Velméir to resign because of lack of activity on Wittenberg and in Talossan society in general (Lytheria 3.1). On Monday, 27 October, 2003, Matthias Muth did just that, though for him, burnout with Talossa in general was a contributing factor. Let's take a look at the Lytheria Codex, Volume III, Book 2, which is a repository for Wittenberg X 7817, the "Gruber-Madison Correspondence" post where Chris lays out numerous emails in his efforts to counter Ben's charges of power-grabbing (more on that in a bit).

Tomás had expressed some doubt to Chris about the wording of the Statement and Chris concurred. When Tomás, as Støtanneu Editor-in-Chief, asked Chris if the Grey Congress was going to officially sign it (he had to publish it the next day), Chris said "Let's not." There were too many doubts and Ben's people (read: Ben) did nothing to address the Greys' concerns. Both Tomas and Chris knew what they were doing. But, there were a few miscues on the part of the Grey Congress. Let's ponder things some more.

If the following Wittenberg posts confuse you, welcome to my world. To this day, I have not gotten a full understanding of the exact minutia of what went on, but I offer my best summarized understanding.

In the wake of my 25 October Prime Dictate, the Grey Congress and Black Hand felt alienated and felt the need to inform me of their alienation. Hence, the Joint Statement... However, at some point, the Black Hand got the mistaken impression that the Grey Congress had signed off on the deal, when in fact it had not. Honest mistakes were made by both sides of the debate.

> Grubi is the one who is imagining stuff, I'm afraid. After this election, Jeff plunged the country into complete chaos with his 'resignation' announcement, something that should have been done before the election so voters knew exactly what they were getting (we all thought we were voting for Jeff, didn't we?)

Yes, this is true. :)

> Grubi's party then proceeded to make, and then break, two very important agreements on government with the MN.

Two? What was there, apart from the Joint Statement confusion?

And if Grubi as party president never actually gave an "official" approval to the Joint Statement, even though you and I and others understood him to have done so, does that still constitute making and breaking a deal? The GCP is guilty of poor communication, yes; both within its own ranks and with the MN. But continuously levelling false charges of *intentional* deception are not very productive.

> Lisa, I just hope you're reading ALL the posts and not getting a Grubified version of events. He hasn't been accurate at all, at least on Witt.

You haven't either, always. :)

Honestly, it does seem sometimes that once you get an idea in your head, whether it is right or not, you just will not change your mind, ever. Like with "Advertgate" last election -- you never did say "well, sorry, I guess I was wrong about the GCP intentionally stuffing the advert queue with the goal of marginalising the other parties"; it's like that's your story and you're sticking with it, even though it was never true. And you're doing it again now with the Joint Statement and the Cort Seat thing. You interpreted a message of Grubi's as officially signing on to the Joint Statement (and I admit I would have too, in your shoes; it was not clearly expressed) when he didn't intend it. On the basis of your believing we had officially signed off on it, so did I. But that wasn't Grubi's intent. It's too bad we find out about this now instead of before it all happened, certainly! And I will be the first to say that the GCP is guilty of bad communication, and I'm sorry for it. But there was no backstabbing.

> First of all, Grubi is not the only person being "hurt" here. Maxime is royally pissed at the shabby treatment he received from the PC, and from the TWO knives plunged into his back by Gruber.

I'm not saying Maxime doesn't have the right to be upset here or disappointed here. Sure he does. But what "TWO knives plunged into his back"?

> And second of all, nothing false or inaccurate has been said about the Grey Congress. They entered into two agreements with the MN and then stabbed us in the back twice in the space of a couple days.

You're doing it again. BAD COMMUNICATION, YES. BACKSTABBING, NO!

> > Even the Queen has now taken to infantile name calling (refer to the post "This is not Ben talking.") Frankly, this is ludicrous folks (and not very regal, in my opinion).

>

> If my wife and I are not free to express our opinions and cite relevant facts, then Talossa is not a free country. We'd like to keep Talossa free, if you don't mind.

Of course Talossa is a free country. Nobody want to change that. Every Talossan is free to express his or her opinions.

But calling another Talossan the "scum of the earth" (especially one so very patriotic and who has contributed as much to Talossa as Chris Gruber) is a nasty, cheap shot and is completely out of line.

Grubi is guilty of this too; I called him on one somewhere down below, and he apologised. Amy should do the same.

> > If there's such a thing as a Talossan patriot, Grubi is one. He's done a lot for this country, and its King, yet he's being treated like a traitor. He feels that he's being actively driven out and he's justifiably upset by this.

Nobody is actively trying to drive Chris out. I understand he is upset, and rightly so about some things. But that is exaggerating the situation!

> With all due respect, he's behaving like a paranoid nutcase,

If I'm not mistaken, Chris does suffer from clinical depression. We are dealing with a medical condition here that affects his moods and behaviours. That does not excuse his actions, of course, but it should be kept in mind. Perhaps some extra indulgence and forgiveness is in order. There are things he can't help.

> trying to cover his tracks, belligerently wailing at people that didn't do anything wrong,

Now, now. You're not entirely innocent here; you are the one who keeps construing unintentional offences as intentional ones -- now with the bad communication and Joint-Statement-gate, last election with Advertgate -- and refuses to accept the fact that they *were not intentional*.

> and revealing himself to be a total jerk--something that Amy and I learned through sad experience during his visit here last year, when (among other things) he barged into my wife's living room and ordered her to get off the couch during a Brewers game so he could watch Talossan videos. ("You don't tell me what to do in my own house," my wife said. "Well, they're going to lose anyway," Grubi replied with a snarl. What an asshole!)

Yes, that was very rude. I completely agree with you. However, the question of intent is crucial, in my opinion. Grubi is not, in any way, a bad or mean person. He says and does things that offend people, but it is not his *intent* to do so. I am sensitive to this, having grown up with a sibling who has, shall we say, "social interaction problems"; despite his great intelligence and amazing musical talent, he just has no clue what is or is not appropriate to say or do in a given social context or situation, and has suffered greatly throughout his life as a result. People who don't know him, who experience him only in situations like that, walk away thinking he is a weirdo, a freak, a jerk, an asshole, or worse, when in fact he is one of the most talented, most honest, most generous, and most pure-hearted people in the world. I think I probably know Grubi better than a lot of other Talossans (except for Lisa, of course ;-)) and I think he is the same way.

> Yes, he's done a lot for Talossa. That much is true. But doesn't give him the right to hold the rest of us hostage to his craven designs.

He doesn't have any "craven designs".

> > > And unlike other folks, I don't think he's imagining things.

>

> Imagination is a good thing. Taking leave of one's senses is not.

No, it is not, and he has gotten out of line again, just like in the fracas that followed Advertgate last winter. But like I said, there is a medical condition involved, and the question of intent is a crucial one. We should all be helping him get "back to normal", not vilifying him and continuously misconstruing his words and actions, however poorly communicated, when we now know what he did or didn't really mean.

> Unless and until you admit that Grubi is the one being "destructive and immature," this crisis will never be resolved.

See above. You have both been "destructive and immature" at times. Both of you. Grubi needs to take a step back (time off if need be) to cool down and get his emotions and anger in check, and accept the fact that he was responsible for not effectively or properly communicating some things. You need to accept the fact that you misunderstood some things and stop misconstruing unintentional offences as intentional ones, and stop going on about knifing and backstabbing and craven designs.

Tomás Gariçéir

Speak Talossan. Vote GCP. Be happy.

RE: Imaginary stuff (Witt X 5763)

posted by [Tomás Gariçéir] on November 09, 2003 - 13:28.

[Ben:] > then (or simultaneously) you demanded all those cabinet positions, and we agreed to that--and then you rejected that agreement.

Really? I don't think I ever saw an email or anything to that effect (I'm not saying you didn't sent one, just if you did, I don't remember seeing it). I just remember Grubi deciding "we're not going with it since the MN hasn't responded".

> If you say you agree to something and then later on say you "didn't really mean it," what am I supposed to believe?

That's the point; you interpreted his "I like it" to mean "OK, it's official" (and I would have too, had it been me; he did not communicate well) when, from his point of view, he never actually explicitly said "OK, it's official" to either you or us, so therefore it wasn't.

That's what I mean when I said poor communication and misunderstandings. There was no intentional "stabbing in the back".

[Ben:] > > > He hasn't been accurate at all, at least on Witt.

>

[Tomás:] > > You haven't either, always. :)

>

[Ben:] > Show me where.

With your claims of backstabbing and "craven designs". Neither of which are true. We were bad communicators, and didn't have our act together. But not backstabbers, or craven, or any of those things.

> Tomás, you knew that by stuffing the rotation with 60 ads, you'd get ten times more exposure than any other party.

It truly, honestly did not get to that point. Grubi got really into making the ads and was having a blast doing them, and didn't even consider the number. I honestly think he expected that the other parties would make a bunch of ads too. This is what I mean about construing inintentional offences as intentional. There was never any "hey, let's make 60 ads, that way we'll get loads more exposure than anyone else". It was only "Whee, this is fun! Let's stick em all in the rotation!"

> That's all I said, and I stand by what I said.

Like I said. You ascribe to us intentions that were never there, and refuse to change your story.

Whatever, it's over now. I don't want to beat a dead horse.

> Then he should have come out here and admitted he misspoke, and apologized for any confusion. Instead, he comes out here blasting me as a "fucking shithead" or whatever it was.

Yes. You are absolutely right. He should have, and I'm sorry he didn't. It reflects badly on our party.

> And frankly, you shouldn't be out here carrying his water.

As long as I don't have to pass it. ;-)

> I guess he just isn't man enough to do it himself.

I think maybe he's trying to avoid losing his temper again and making the situation worse.

> His intent was to say "I like it. Be sure and put Andy's name on it too." How the hell else am I supposed to read that?!

I know, I would have interpreted it the same way you did. But since he's clearly stated that he didn't mean it like that, regardless of how poorly he communicated it, should we not accept that and say "whoa, that was a pretty big screw up, better be a lot more clear and careful next time", instead of continuing to insist that he meant something else and is evil, craven, backstabbing, two-faced, etc.?

> In his effort to argue there was no 'backstabbing,' Grubi has indulged in enough gratuitous 'frontstabbing' to make those efforts largely irrelevant, don't you agree?

Yes, unfortunately. When he feels attacked, especially if he is having a "low" episode, he loses control and gets nasty. I wish it wasn't the case, but there's nothing I can do about it except try to help him keep it in check. (Not that I'm doing a particularly good job of that, either.) However, you are not helping the situation by continuing to misconstrue his motives, however badly expressed, and impugn his character; you're keeping him upset and in "attack" mode.

> > Of course Talossa is a free country. Nobody want to change that. Every Talossan is free to express his or her opinions.

>

> Well, apparently not in Lisa's case.

Why not? She didn't say you *couldn't* express your opinions, just that she didn't like *how* you did. That's part of free speech too, isn't it?

> And the language Grubi used to describe me wasn't a nasty, cheap shot and wasn't completely out of line?

Yes, it was. I cringed every time he did it, and I called him on it at one point.

> Be serious: As much as he's done for Talossa, wouldn't you agree I've done a little bit more?

Come on, Ben, you've done more for Talossa than *any* other Talossan. You created the country, for Heaven's sake!

> If he ever honestly apologized, I never saw it.

[This post.](http://www.talossa.net/wittenberg/show.php?fid=1&id=5740) [link to <http://www.talossa.net/wittenberg/show.php?fid=1&id=5740>]

> > > With all due respect, he's behaving like a paranoid nutcase,

>

> > If I'm not mistaken, Chris does suffer from clinical depression. We are dealing with a medical condition here

>

> Then you need to go to him privately and tell him to GET THE HELL OFF WITTENBERG!

Yes, I should have.

> So basically what you're telling me that I shouldn't take anything any of you guys say seriously, right? Because it might always be a "miscommunication."

No, I'm not saying that. I'm just saying that it's what happened here. And I am sorry for it. We need to get our act together in the future and be a lot more careful how we say things. And you should always ask, "Is that official?" :-)

> (Psychoanalysis, snipped)

Fine -- snip it if you want, but it's important, so read it, take it to heart, and keep it in mind. Because I'm right. :-)

Tomás Gariçéir

RE: Imaginary stuff (Witt X 5767),
posted by [Tomás Gariçéir] on November 09, 2003 - 14:45

I'm probably going to regret stepping in, but...

[Ben:] > > So when we found that the Greys were as pissed off about being taken for granted as we were, of course we talked to them.
> > The issue of them not being willing to say it publicly is a different matter.

I would like to say here that — at least from my standpoint of view — the issue was not that the GCP was unwilling to say publicly that we were pissed off about being taken for granted by the PC. We were, and that is why I (at least) said I was OK with the Joint Statement as you proposed it.

The problem was that between the time I said OK and the time you submitted it to Støtanneu as having been approved by both parties and set for publication, I had received what I considered reliable testimony from the PC that they were *not* taking us for granted or intentionally ignoring us.

Then I was stuck, because that had taken place within the context (again) of "confidential" correspondence, so what to do? Betray the PC's confidence by passing said emails on to you and renegeing on (or at least trying to persuade you to modify) the Joint Statement? Betray the MN's confidence by revealing the Joint Statement to the PC and discussing it? Do all this "personally", or as a representative of my party, and if the latter just carry on or wait to get the approval of my other party comrades first before every move?

Of course, in the end I guess I pissed the MN off more than the PC, but I didn't want to piss anybody off because there were Talossans I admire and respect on all sides. Whichever way I looked at it, I lost, and in the end, sure enough, I lost.

[Chris Gruber:] > > > I keep hearing how "stellar" his Talossan record is... HOW? What change has he affected? What new ideas has he come up with? What bold leadership has he displayed? He made himself a perpetual nuisance to the Gruber administration, what with Questions to the Executive and his god-awful idea for a 5-man Cort.

> >

> > > Where is this stellar record?

> >

> > You were willing to support him, as long as you thought you could get a Cort seat out of the deal.

I suppose it's fine to say now that out of the three of us, Grubi had the biggest problem with Maxime. He never liked the idea of Maxime for PM. My recollection is hazy due to all the confusion, but I think it may even have been me that asked Grubi if he would consider backing Maxime anyway if we could get something worthwhile for ourselves, such as Andy for IM.

Oh crap, this whole débacle could be my fault after all! Shit, that is really depressing. :-(I deny everything!

[Chris Gruber:] > Again, i never asked for any such thing. Why would I make a demand for something that was already promised to me, no matter what deals were cut?

That is my fault -- Ben did quote an email I sent to him which listed your Cort seat (or rather, a guarantee that you would get it rather than simply a "Grubi will be considered") as one of the things the GCP wanted in exchange for siding with the MN against the PC and backing Maxime for PM. I guess I must have thought that was one of the things we were asking for. You can't blame Ben for thinking that, since I did and told him so. I'm sorry for that confusion.

See? This is why I should never get involved in politics. Slap me.

> Maxime has actually participated in riots, Ben. What have I done that even comes CLOSE to that?

This is true, Ben; Grubi does have a good point here. :)

However, to be fair, Grubi, you do sometimes have a bad temper and a tendency to descend into vulgarity and nasty namecalling, which reflects badly on the party. That needs to be kept in check, especially in a high-up public position such as Cort Justice or Seneschál. I'm saying this as your friend and Comrade-in-Grey, because it's one of the things that made me feel that I had to step back into the fray as peace-maker when I wanted to walk away from the whole thing. I guess those are our respective character flaws: I shut down and disappear, you get nasty. Unfortunately, I'm afraid the latter appears to be worse in the eyes of other Talossans than the former. :(

OK, group hug.

> MY blunders? You've yet to admit you lied, that you decided I was up to something I was never up to.

Here we go again. OK, look everyone: there were mistakes on all sides.

The GCP did not effectively communicate with the MN regarding the Joint Statement. The MN believed that the party had officially approved it when it had not (although certain members had).

Because of this, the MN (or at least Ben) mistakenly believed/believes that the GCP supported the Joint Statement (or sentiments therein) and backed Maxime for PM merely a "ruse" and a means to further our own "craven" political ambitions and betrayed the MN by backing out when our "demands" were not met.

The GCP also mistakenly assumed that the MN (or Ben) had decided to give UC the Cort seat that Grubi had been in line for, in retaliation for the GCP's aforementioned "betrayal".

The GCP, the MN, and the PC **all** erred in conducting most or all of the aforementioned business largely in private and confidentially between individuals, instead of out in the open. Many of the things that are being said now (such as Michael's post above regarding issues in Maxime's Talossan record which in their eyes make him a bad candidate for PM) should have been said out in the open long *before* now. :-)

> You are a big man now that you've moved out of your daddy's house, aren't you?

Dammit, Grubi, that's the sort of cheap, unnecessary, personal potshot that tarnishes the GCP's image. As a party we need to be above this sort of thing! Please.

Tomás Gariçéir

Speak Talossan. Vote GCP. Be happy.

RE: May I interject? (Witt X 5737)

posted by [Tomás Gariçéir] on November 08, 2003 - 12:39.

The above Witt posts certainly sound like sincere apologies from Tomás, admitting his own mistakes as well as those of his party where the Joint Statement was concerned. Remembering the friendship and trust he had in Gruber and Tomás over the years, Ben could have said "Now, don't do that anymore!" with a grin, then let it go. A rational person would have done so. This is why the PC was so angry: Ben was unable, unwilling or both to draw the line between what one person has termed his "wargame" and his real-life relationships with real-life people.

Silence

When Ben went after someone or some group, he was used to silent acquiescence. The Progressive Conservative Party had been silent when Ián Anglatzarâ and his comrades were being raked over the coals, and when Ben threw his fit over Ián's attempted return to Talossa. Talossa in general had been silent when Ben had derided the 'Greek God Guy.' Too, too many people stood aside while he ridiculed Phil Ledgerwood, who considered himself a true friend of Ben's. The pattern was for the King of Talossa to steamroll people, and for the other Powers-That-Were-At-The-Time to do nothing about it. Besides the bitter tone, what made Halloween 2003 so different was that--maybe for the first time--Ben's steamrolling attempt against a Talossan was being openly challenged by members of what the King would in Spring 2004 term the Talossan "establishment" (pretty rich coming from the Founder and Guru of it all). Chris was merely one of the challengers.

It was also clear at this point that Ben had a double standard. Several time, he asked Chris to just let it go. Fine--but Ben still referred to "loyal Talossans" in reference to the Penguinia-Wardlow-Anglemark wars that had ended years ago. It was now clear to all of us in the PC that Ben never forgot the most trivial slight and never let anything go - ever. This raised a very good question, on which Ben Madison disagreed with many: *when do we change from political-wargame mindset to a mindset of reality?*

Were Ián Anglatzarâ and his Liberal pals really traitors? What did they specifically do to merit Ben's hatred? What about Charles Sauls? What about Miestrâ Schivâ? The PC had been regrettably silent where the Liberals were concerned, but the PC rank-and-file never forgot what happened with all these people. Here began the death spiral of the Ben Madison 'cult of tolerance.'

For each person, this 'cult' meant something slightly different. For me, it meant: "Ben knows a lot more about these things than I ever could. He created Talossa, and he must know what's best. I trust the man. If he says the Liberals were traitors, then why shouldn't I believe him?" What's more, it was easy to see the consequences of going against Ben. In Talossa, going up against Ben meant the end of your Talossan fun. Only his oldest friends could get away with the cardinal sin of challenging him.



From l-r: Ián Anglatzarâ, ca. 1998; Charles Sauls, ca. 1997; and Miestrâ Schivâ in 2000

The end of the Coalition

> Oh crap, this whole débacle

Débâcle. CIRCUMFLEX, MAAAAAN!

> > You are a big man now that you've moved out of your daddy's house, aren't you?

>

> Dammit, Grubi, that's the sort of cheap, unnecessary, personal potshot that tarnishes the GCP's image. As a party we need to be above this sort of thing! Please.

Fine. I withdraw this comment and apologise. Things I say in anger that have no bearing on the situation at hand are rude and unnecessary. Again, I apologise.

VOTE FOR The Grey Congress Party/El Parti del Congreßeu Grischün and stop feeling guilty.

RE: May I interject? (Witt X 5740),

posted by **Retroradio Gruber** on November 08, 2003 - 14:09.

May I call upon the parties involved to drop the issue so that the non-combatants can come out of their nuclear shelters again?

I'm well aware that people's feelings and pride have been hurt in the Halloween-Crisis but please, ladies and gentlemen, step away from that keyboard and take a deep breath.

If you still feel upset then by all means ignore the other party, just don't give into the urge to prove you are right and the other is wrong. You may very well be but there is no way we can tell as we weren't there and frankly we probably don't even want to know the details. As spicy as they might be ;-)

Hoping not to sound too patronising,
UC

The Halloween Fallout (Witt X 5755)

posted by **UC** on November 09, 2003 - 08:54.

Well said, UC. I feel the same way.

I keep trying to point out that the whole thing was the result of bad communication on all sides, and that we should all just drop the matter and put it behind us, but nobody seems to be listening to me. :-(

Tomás Gariçéir

Speak Talossan. Vote GCP. Be happy.

RE: The Halloween Fallout (Witt X 5757)

posted by **[Tomás Gariçéir]** on November 09, 2003 - 09:20.

> Well said, UC. I feel the same way.

>

> I keep trying to point out that the whole thing was the result of bad communication on all sides, and that we should all just drop the matter and put it behind us, but nobody seems to be listening to me. :-(

That's not true -- I have been trying to move forward on this, but Ben (and his wife?) are still leveling false charges against me. I have made an effort. Why can't he?

VOTE FOR The Grey Congress Party/El Parti del Congreßeu Grischün and stop feeling guilty.

RE: The Halloween Fallout (Witt X 5759)

posted by **Chirisch Cavéir** on November 09, 2003 - 10:29.



Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau in August, 2003

On 4 November, the Black Hand party officially withdrew from the Coalition (Witt X 5508) and went into Opposition, leaving me with a minority government of only the PC and the Grey Congress. The ZPT had only seven Cosâ seats and included only Gary Cone and the incommunicado party leader, Chêne Velmêir. The rest of its members were siding with the PC in protest of Ben's behavior of the past few months. Now this tiny party held the balance of Talossan power, for in union with the MN they represented a majority. The flap over the seven ZPT seats, and the question as to who actually owned them and what to do with them, and how his question was handled became "Seatgate." Chris Gruber was named as Deputy Prime Minister on 9 November.

At the same time, the Black Hand got the impression that either Gruber or I would call for a new election immediately and that I would resign the PMship that very week instead of at the end of the year. Of course, this was not helped by the fact of my inadvertently including the King on an email to the Grey Congress and the PC about my possibly having the government dissolved if the King had vetoed my PD making Gruber my DPM (that's what I get for not paying better attention to Eudora's autofill-address-field feature)!

Using an Organic Law loophole, King Robert I dismissed my minority government and made Maxime Prime Minister on 11 November (Witt X 5880). The ZPT had sided with the MN. My first administration was over.

This abrupt dismissal was legal, but the PC saw it as an affront. Gary Cone, the de-facto ZPT leader in Velmêir's absence, had longstanding personal loyalty toward the King. He also sincerely desired to stabilize the government. He became Charbonneau's Deputy Prime Minister.

"Jeffgate," as I now call it, made the future Founding Parents of the Republic even angrier with Ben (we were well on our way to having enough "gates" to construct a fence). It was a major reason for the first mention, in early 2004, of a 'Republic of Talossa.' At the time, the majority of us dismissed all thought of secession or revolution—but that dismissal wouldn't last.

[Gödafríeu Válcadác'h in his 12 November, 2003 "A Speech to the Nation to end all speeches":] > and most-of-all, to Michael Pope who stepped aside so that I could have a chance at the PMship. To all these people as well as everyone who ever gave me a Vote of Confidence at any time, I say THANK YOU!!

In my opinion, Gödafríeu, you were a success as PM and a worthy successor who has my utmost respect. I feel you were ill-used at this point in time.

> Maxime, take care of our kingdom.

We'll see. I don't hold out much hope.

- **RE: A Speech to the Nation to end all Speeches** (Witt X 5891)
posted by Michael Pope on November 12, 2003 - 08:53

[Gödafríeu Válcadác'h:] > > and most-of-all, to Michael Pope who stepped aside so that I could have a chance at the PMship. To all these people as well as everyone who ever gave me a Vote of Confidence at any time, I say THANK YOU!!

>

[Michael Pope:] > In my opinion, Gödafríeu, you were a success as PM and a worthy successor who has my utmost respect. I feel you were ill-used at this point in time.

>

>

> > Maxime, take care of our kingdom.

>

> We'll see. I don't hold out much hope.

I'm going to have to agree with Michael on both of these points. This was no way to end Gödafríeu's highly productive tenure. He deserves better.

Max, however, has yet to earn any position in Talossa.

- **RE: A Speech to the Nation to end all Speeches** (Witt X 5892)
posted by Retroradio Gruber on November 12, 2003 - 09:29

[Gary Cone:] > Given that Gruber is doing his damn best to destroy the King at every possible opportunity now,

The King worked to keep me from the office of PM, and in the process pissed off Tomás Gariçéir, shat on Gödafríeu Válcadác'h, and basically alienated nearly EVERY MAJOR personality in the Kingdom.

- from **RE: Charbonneau Government, Week 1** (Witt X 6286)
posted by Retroradio Gruber on November 14, 2003 - 23:49

[Michael Pope:] > And we've seen the mastermind [Ben] behind the whole Charbonneau Government turn the Halloween Crisis into the Halloween Massacre when he used sleazy maneuverings in smoke-filled back rooms to unceremoniously toss out one of the best PM's Talossa has ever seen. And that PM, Gödafríeu Válcadác'h, was just collateral damage in Ben's drive to destroy another one of the best PM's Talossa has ever seen, Chris Gruber.

I thank you for the compliment, Michael. But you are right. In Ben's rabid mission to hurt me, he shat upon a very dedicated and patriotic Talossan, Gödafríeu Válcadác'h, who set new standards for activity in the PM's office.

> Shameful. Simply shameful.

Agreed. But, maybe there's no-where to go but up? ;-)

- from **RE: Charbonneau Government, Week 1** (Witt X 6256)
posted by Retroradio Gruber on November 14, 2003 - 17:07

[Ben:] > His intent was to say "I like it [the Joint Statement]. Be sure and put Andy's name on it too." How the hell else am I supposed to read that?!

I know, I would have interpreted it the same way you did. But since he's clearly stated that he didn't mean it like that, regardless of how poorly he communicated it, should we not accept that and say "whoa, that was a pretty big screw up, better be a lot more clear and careful next time", instead of continuing to insist that he meant something else and is evil, craven, backstabbing, two-faced, etc.?

-from **RE: Imaginary stuff** (Witt X 5767), posted by [Tomás Gariçéir]
on November 09, 2003 - 14:45



From left to right: Ián Metáiriá , Andy Lowry, and Gary Cone at the Living Cosá on 12 July, 2003

The following, from my Speech to the Nation of 12 November, 2003, exhibits my state of mind at the time:

There is a phenomena which happens to many Talossans from time to time and it has been happening to me for quite some time, though until recently, I have buried my head in the sand: burnout. I have enjoyed being your Prime Minister and I am proud of the work I have done, but I have reached a point where I must attend better to my non-Talossan life and spend less time on our nationette. I have reached the point where I need to put more emphasis on the "grown-up" facets of my life outside of Talossa. It is for these reasons that I resigned effective 31 December of this year, though forces beyond my control have deemed my PMship to have ended on Tuesday, 11 November, 2003, as indeed it has. I resigned effective on 31 December to allow for a smooth and orderly transition. Clearly the Black Hand and the ZPT have seen fit to have things speeded up a bit.

While I am thoroughly disgusted with the King's actions this past evening, I am not surprised. The Black Hand was clearly behind Maxime's candidacy and was able to convince Gary Cone and the ZPT to support him. So be it. May Maxime be a bang-up PM and exceed my admittedly somewhat-lukewarm expectations of him. We now have as our Seneschál a man who has gone on record time and time again to be someone who loathes the Western way of life, someone who loathes our nation's greatest ally, someone who has made anti-Isreal remarks time and time again and has been unrepentant. Yet the mostly-fanatically-pro-Isreal Black Hand party has made Mr. Charbonneau their and our new Prime Minister. This incongruency is most-odd, and the Black Hand has yet to give the Talossan people a decent explanation for this paradox.

I am shocked at all this. Indeed I am stunned. I am saddened that what I feel was a decently-successful PMship in many ways has come to a close in this manner. **This is NOT the way it should have ended!!** I wish the Black Hand could have let me resign with dignity. Instead, it has decided to simply throw me out of office. Frankly, it is difficult to not take this one personally, but for the sake of my own sanity as well as the sake of this community and country I have grown to love, I must try. Ho, hum...

-from **A Speech to the Nation to end all Speeches** (Witt X 5887),
posted by Gödafríeu Válcadac'h on November 12, 2003 - 02:20

This Wittenberg post explains partly what was going through the King's mind when he threw me out of office. It is a classically Talossan example of how a simple misunderstanding, miscommunication, or miscalculation can have such spectacular consequences.

Well, here's the answer to the mystery. :-)

I went back to my home computer which is where I read the original I-will-resign post. For whatever reason, sometimes Wittenberg comes in on my screen too wide--that is, that stupid grey bar at the bottom appears, and to read the entire text from left to right, I have to constantly go down with the cursor and shift the bar to the right to see the right-edge of the page.

Anyhow, I usually don't bother doing that. If a letter or word is missing on the right hand side, context is usually enough to fill it in.

Well, it wasn't in this case.

Early in the post, Jeff said he was going to resign on "Wednesday," and then gave the date. But I just saw the first part of the word "Wednesday." A couple paragraphs below, was the instruction that Andy Lowry would take over the Immigration Ministry on "Wednesday," followed by the November date.

I assumed that both "Wednesdays" were the same!

In the back of my mind, of course, was Gruber's repeated insistence (in three separate posts that I had just read) that the Cosà was about to be dissolved as soon as he took over. ("We'll let the people decide," etc.) I put these things together in my head and came to an erroneous conclusion.

Well, not completely erroneous as I was only off by one Clark.

But sufficiently erroneous to have bungled the date. My bad.

Ben

RE: ...and the perils of computing (Witt X 6192)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on November 14, 2003 - 10:56. Viewed **31** times.

What Andy had to say

Howdy now,

I guess I'm being treated to quite the hot'n'heavy flame war. Not the first I've seen, but the most ugly as yet.

Chris is a citizen of long stature and proven dedication. He cares about Talossa deeply enough that this latest round of disgusting slanders is affecting him in a personal way. Even if I were not a member of his political party, I would find what I have been reading from Ben and Amy scurrilous. Such personal attacks are unwelcome to those of us who would like to advance Talossan ideals, not to mention basic decency.

Chris is no more "socialist" and "anti-American" than Ben. To accuse a person of treason and "un-American activities" seems, sadly, to be a part of the usual bag of ugly invective hurled by Ben at anyone he disagrees with over an issue involving American politics. I was a traitor in his eyes for having questions about the Iraq war-- questions that have been borne out as crucial problems, I might add.

We don't all have to agree on everything, obviously-- what would be the fun in that? But to allow the conversation and debate to degenerate into playground-style namecalling is simply beneath us all. I was especially shocked by Amy's uncalled-for and uncited insults.

Chris is, as we all know, a highly-strung and passionate person. First time I met him, he immediately insulted me-- but I got past that. He is not, however, a liar. I was lucky enough to have been copied on most of the torrent of email regarding the "deal" that Ben has accused us Greys of being untrustworthy on, and I will now state that he (Ben) either misunderstood what was going on (as Tomas so generously suggested) or deliberately spun the whole thing into a self-serving falsehood of a straw-man issue (which is what I, in my usual paranoia, suspect) in order to stir the pot a bit.

I must say that I'm feeling a little let-down and underappreciated when Chris is accused of being anti-American. He's just pro-dissent, which the Founding Daddies would appreciate. The only real live anti-American (policy-wise) guy around here who ain't Canadian is ME. Dammit! Where's my recognition? :->

Being a relative newcomer to Talossa, I have no way of knowing if the extremism I've been seeing here lately is normal or not, though I gather that it might be. Let me make my views on all this absolutely clear:

1.The GCP DID NOT renege on any agreements.

2. The MN was being quite weird and possibly devious when it suggested Max as PM, and was probably involved in some manner of game-playing thereby.
3. Amy, who is a non-contributor here overall, has no business insulting Chris in this venue. If she has personal difficulties with him, then they are best left at rest. If she wants to be unpleasant to people, she might do better to use postcards.
4. Ben is being quite vicious in making personal attacks against someone who was perfectly willing to be a friendly ally (and I will admit that I was not so willing myself). I am suspicious that this is mostly mere posturing, but am disheartened by its human effects.
5. This is 'Talossa, not "Ben-Land". If Ben wants it all for himself, then he can have it. No loss at all. Talossa is much more than Ben.
6. Ben seems to be shopping for enemies, for some reason. I am not one, yet.
7. I hate the idea of trying to fulfill the IM duties at a time when all hell is shaking loose. I'll do it, though, for the 37 and 1/2 seconds I'm permitted to.
8. I beg any concerned Talossan to join together in a coalition, regardless of party affiliation or voting status, to help carry us all through this terrible time. Uppity of me? I spose. But more of us need to follow Tomas's lead and call for unity of purpose.

Thanks,

Andy

P.S.

Since there has been some confusion as to what is "official" and not, I am not speaking for anyone other than myself here. I did not vet my thoughts with Chris or Tomas or anyone else before jotting them down. What I say here is not the official position of the GCP.

Too Sexy for my Flag
old skewl warez d00d
Dvorak Demon
Tired and Grumpy Old Bastard

What you foo's be doin'? (Witt X 5882)
posted by **Andy** on November 11, 2003 - 23:17

"This [above Witt X 5882] is one of the best ways to summarize what happened."

- Chris Gruber in his proofreading notes for this chapter

PM....Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau

Maxime's tenure as PM was, to put it mildly, unproductive. He refused to admit any wrongdoing on Ben's part; in fact, he didn't (or refused to) do much at all. He certainly didn't bring any sense of unity to a divided nation. Whatever he might have done was hampered by a transit strike in his locality. In an email to fellow PC members, I referred to Ben, Gary, and Max as "R. Maxidon Charboccone". Even so, we didn't really see how lacking Max's leadership was until...

The Ben-renunciation crisis

But before we get to that little scandal, let's revisit another (boldfacing mine):

[Gödafríeu:] > Once you have given us something concrete to talk about, we can then start discussing the issues instead of having to reach back SIX YEARS for "political ammo" to use against the PC, a party of which you once were a part.

Not to belabor the point, but the supposed "anarchist riot" was a LONG time ago, **and even September 11th was a LONG time ago**. If you're really serious about not reaching back into ancient history, please don't do it then.

Let's look at what Max has done as a potential and actual PRIME MINISTER in 2003, compare it with what Gruber has been doing as a potential Prime Minister in 2003. (Gruber, meanwhile, is still a potential Cort Justice. Jeff, care to offer a few words as to his conduct in that rôle?)

Ben

RE: Max, you have GOT to be kidding me!! (Witt X 6358)

posted by **[R. Ben Madison]** on November 16, 2003 - 19:28. Viewed **25** times.

Sorry Ben, but September 11 will *never* be "a long time ago". Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I think this says quite enough about Ben's behavior. Now, on to the renunciation...

Azul,

You win.

Effective 24 hours after the official recognition of this post (whatever exactly that constitutes), I renounce my Talossan citizenship.

Sincerely,

R. Ben Madison

I renounce my Talossan citizenship. (Witt X 6596)

posted by **[R. Ben Madison]** on November 20, 2003 - 21:40. Viewed **86** times.

Many in the Kingdom, I included, took Ben seriously; we were shocked. With this single post, he had thrown things into quite a tizzy. The 1997 Organic Law stipulated a 'Prince/Princess of Prospect' to take over should the reigning monarch cease to reign. The Princess of Prospect was none other than Jennifer Madison, the King's sister, who had not been active in any Talossan way, shape, or form (save to vote when called upon by Ben, assuming he actually even contacted her) since at least the start of the cybercit era in 1996. There was no Regent in place. If Jennifer, as Queen, proved as inactive a monarch as she had been as a private citizen in the last ten years or so, we would have had to elect a new monarch in this chaotic political environment. We had a constitutional crisis on our hands.

Instead of trying to start working out the myriad of constitutional matters in the wake of Ben's renunciation, Maxime had this to say:

Azul,

I'm working full time from 13hr to 21 hr.. But the Bus and the subway are stop because of a Bus driver strike here in Montreal. I have to quit my house early and I arrive at my home pass midnight tired of my day work.

I read the Witt , what I can do nothing , you're republicans and republicans never change their mind. You don't like me so why should I spent time debating with you?

Your tactics destroy the kingdom and even worst the king himself.

Maxime P-Charbonneau

PS this gouvernement wait to see if the king come back or not.
Join the team support Charbonneau for the Senat Campaign 2003

PM victim of a strike in Montreal (Witt X 6632)

posted by [Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau] on November 21, 2003 - 10:58.

From this chaos, many of us realized something positive: with Ben gone, everyone got along fine! MN-PC, PC-ZPT, ZPT-MN, or whatever, even after the many insults from Chris Gruber... Many of us saw that Chris was not the problem. His behavior at times was *a* problem, but he was not *the* problem. Unlike the King and Founder, Chris Gruber was not a burdensome stone around the neck of Talossa.

Though I had asked Ben to stay, to my surprise, a part of me was deeply relieved that he was gone. I felt liberated. It was quite a heady moment for many of us. One day, we would act to regain that feeling.

Not everyone was taken in by Ben's "departure". A few Talossans saw through Ben's renunciation for what it turned out to be: a cheap stunt.

Azul.

What an enlightening day!

The Opposition has not changed one whit--still divisive, still petty, still angry. No shock to the system seems enough to calm them down.

Several personal appeals have been made for me to return. I appreciate them. Although the tone on Wittenberg is clearly "Ben, please come back. Ben, you're a creep."

So, I'm back. And I'm going to be a creep.

In the days ahead, I will be outlining a royal policy which, I hope, will end paranoia and personal vindictiveness once and for all in Talossa. This policy may result in the loss of one or more citizens. That is a shame. But we have lost citizens in the past, and Talossa has always survived and prospered. Schneider, Dobberpuhl, Dave Kuenn, Evan Gallagher, Ryan Hughes, Dan Wardlow, Jay Shorten, Johan Anglemark... only the names change. Those of us who want Talossa to be a fun place to live in, remain.

Wasn't it Thomas Jefferson who said every generation needs a revolution?

So yes, I am back, but with a sword in my hand. Deal with it. :-)

Ben

OFFICIAL: I'm back (Witt X 6679)

posted by [R. Ben Madison] on November 21, 2003 - 15:08.

Marti-Pair Furxhéir never officially acknowledged the renunciation, a necessary legal step, but that turned out to be moot. Ben recanted his renunciation well within the Organic Law's mandated twenty-four hours of his departure; even had M-P acknowledged it within five minutes, Ben had ensured that the move was pointless. So much for that, then.

Between Ben's renunciation and return, Art Verbotten had this to say:

Hey Ben,

If you are looking to drive this country into the ground and lose the respect of just about every active citizen in it, keep doing what you are doing.

I just don't understand you right now and I am not the only one.

Take a look at your opposition right now.

The only one who may hate you at the moment is the one your wife resorted to calling a scumbag on this board.

He and the rest of us "traitors" (your term for us, not mine) were trying to take Talossa back from a political party that has used way too many disinterested and disenfranchised Talossans to prop itself up politically.

Scream and moan all you like Ben, but when [sic] Harry & Jennifer, Jean Williams, Tom Buffone, and Wes start getting themselves involved with the rest of the Talossan community, we, the folks who have been running things for the past decade, might not make such an issue about them being used to prop up the MN politically.

Hell, even Brooke shows up for the T-Fests once and awhile.

Anyway, that is what all of this is about, and that was all that it was ever about, until the name calling began.

If people are coming to either side of this argument it is because the vitriole being spewed is polarizing them to one side or the other.

You seem to think people are ganging up on you.

Given your last political moves, do you blame them?

Perhaps it's time for you to admit that you can be King Robert, or Politician Ben, and do each one of those jobs wonderfully, but not at the same time.

If anyone wants to know why we have such shitty immigration, it is because of the behavior and the venom on this board for the past couple of weeks.

From the outside perspective one of my friends who will occasionally check out what is happening describes Wittenberg as two seagulls fighting over a beached fish. "Why do these people put themselves through this?" I was asked

I think Andy Lowry talked about the same issue a few posts down. Unfortunately he's one of several casualties of this bullshit and that is all it is.

So when are we going to stop being pissed and start playing nice?

The ball is in the Kings Cort. [Art probably meant "King's [tennis] court"]

Eif

Breaking some silence between classes (Witt X 6591)

posted by **Art Verbotten** on November 20, 2003 - 21:07.

The hoped-for stability under an MN PM wasn't materializing. Things had gotten rather worse, especially since the King's faux renunciation and return. The King was being obstinate, and the Opposition was keeping up the pressure. Something had to give. It did—in one the great diplomatic miracles in Talossa's history...

The Noodles Summit

The “Noodles Summit” was held over supper between Ián Metáiriâ and the King at *Noodles* restaurant in Milwaukee on the evening of 25 November, 2003. Their agreed terms were announced in a Speech from the Throne (Witt X 6946) three days later.



11 or 12 July, 2003: In one of the most prescient photos ever taken in Talossan history, Gödafriën, the King, and Chris Gruber eat at Noodles restaurant

**Speech from the Throne
26 December 2003**

"Nowhere does the Constitution demand an indifference on the part of the sovereign to the march of political events. Why are princes alone to be denied the credit of having political opinions based upon an anxiety for the national interests and honour of their country and the welfare of mankind? Are they not more independently placed than any other politician in the State? Are their interests not most intimately bound up with those of their country? Is the sovereign not the natural guardian of the honour of his country, is he not necessarily a politician?"

—Prince Albert (1843)

My loyal Talossan subjects,

I come to you this morning with a heavy heart and a deep sense that Talossa has taken a turn for the worse in its twenty-third year. The events of the Halloween Crisis have been yet another reminder of the dark side of Talossa, a pointed indication that there are things in our community that bring out the worst in all of us.

Perhaps what has been most personally distressing for me is the eruption in Talossa of what I can only call American-style politics, or what an American politician once called "the politics of personal destruction." At the risk of public ridicule, let me repeat myself: I honestly believe that on moral grounds, the majority in the Cosà acted properly when it chose, as it was forced to choose, between Maxime Charbonneau and Chris Gruber for Prime Minister. The kindness, maturity, and grace shown by Maxime Charbonneau, in the face of hysterical and violent opposition, clearly showed him to be the right man for the job, regardless of his past or present views on "the United States and Israel," to quote the previous administration.

The term "vicious personal attack" has become a cliché in Talossan politics. This is a sad thing, for the term needs to have a unique bite in order for it to be meaningful, which I fear it no longer is. Verbally assaulting a person's spouse, attacking a Talossan not over their views or opinions but over their job, their sex life, or their family—those are "vicious personal attacks."

The Opposition's inability to *publicly* criticize its own candidate for Prime Minister, at a time when numerous Opposition members were *privately* assuring me that he no longer enjoyed their confidence or even their personal respect, was exceptionally troublesome and echoed to me Ronald Reagan's instruction "not to speak ill of a fellow Republican." If Talossan politics today will tolerate double standards of secrecy and silence so long as the villain has the right party affiliation, then Talossan politics contains within it a dangerous, cancerous growth.

This sort of stuff is not "fun." It does not keep Talossa from being "boring." It is not a question of principle, but merely one of tactical advantage. The Organic Law rightly states that Talossa is, above all, "a community of persons having fun."

For example, a word about non-candidate voters. Year after year, some enterprising politician picks on Talossans who are not online, who don't attend enough parties, or whose voting record is, for want of a better word, too consistent. When the leader of the opposition contrasts the government's legitimate "popular" support—in other words, its support on Wittenberg alone—with its "electoral" support, meaning something less legitimate, then the nation's commitment to democracy and to its own citizens is very thin indeed.

In no other country on earth, would this even be an issue. This issue must be addressed by our government. Consensus must be found, and enforced. There is perhaps no more fundamental question facing Talossa today: What is a Talossan? Are we a nationality, whose members share an innate, persistent Talossanity for ever? Or are we just an internet club, whose members must pay whatever dues the government of the day requires, or lose their vote? Make no mistake: Attacks on non-candidate voters are unpatriotic, discriminatory, unTalossan, racist, hateful, and wrong. Any Talossan can stay a Talossan and participate in whatever way he or she wants to. I take this occasion to rededicate the Monarchy and the State to this vital national principle, for the sake of *all* my subjects.

To pick on four or five inactive people out of a population of 40 or 50 as somehow cosmically preventing Talossa from achieving its rightful destiny, is the Talossan equivalent of Jew-baiting.

As part of the settlement ending the Halloween Crisis, I offered to renounce my participation in partisan politics. This is another reminder that the commonly held stereotype, namely that I am a tyrant, desperately clinging to autocratic power, is wrong. Reality tells a much different story. In January of 1981 I began, on my own initiative, to give space in Stötanneu to Dan Lorentz and Bob Murphy, at that time avowed detractors of Talossa itself. Within a few months, I had opened Talossa to others as citizens, surrendering my entire "World Singular Secessionist" vision of Talossa as a one-man nation. Elections soon followed, and with them the principle that people other than me ought to form governments and parties.

After December of 1984, I promised elections to the Cosà, and within a year, I had surrendered my control of the appointed Senäts and made it an elected chamber. In February of 1987, I gave up my royal powers completely and abdicated in favour of King Robert II, a purely constitutional figurehead—a turn of events that was so horrifying to the majority of Talossans, that they forced me back onto the Throne and restored many of my powers.

Those powers, I then proceeded to largely fritter away once again, sharing power in the July, 1988 Constitutional Convention, and giving the Talossan people the power to determine the nation's very fate in the National Destiny Referendum of November 1990.

By May of 1992 I was proposing handing over all my powers to an elected president, legislation that was voted down not by my side, but by the opposition Left. The following year, I gave up personal control of the Progressive Conservative Party, opening it to other members who could soon outvote me on issues. In 1995, I took the initiative in placing Talossa on the internet, which widened the nation for ever beyond my own personal circle of friends and relations. It was not long before the Organic Law was written, in a process in which I was just one voice of many and indeed, a process directed by Matthias Muth, a member of a rival party. Soon I was vowing to sign Dan Wardlow's asinine "peace treaty," bowing to his moral authority as Prime Minister, and offering to leave the PC entirely and let Wardlow run it because of our disagreements. And then I surrendered control of Stotanau to Chris Gruber (who promptly ran it into the ground after eighteen years of continuous publication).

This past summer, I voluntarily gave up my right to vote in the Cosâ on the override of my own vetoes, and this autumn, I capped it all off by voluntarily proposing my own complete personal removal from the Ziu entirely, something which nobody asked me to do, but which I chose to do myself, for Talossa's benefit. And I have personally drafted an amendment to the Organic Law, which will do just that. You have ratified it, by an overwhelming majority.

And so here we are.

At most of these turns, the initiative for reform, to reduce my lawful powers, has been mine. My entire biography as King has been the constant concession and relinquishing of powers, on the one hand, and the constant refusal to concede one inch on issues of moral right and wrong.

That biography continues today. I hereby resign my membership in the Black Hand Party of Talossa, and I wish my former partisans well in their new identity as something other than the party of the King. Furthermore, I hereby resign my Cosâ seats and encourage the Black Hand to use wisdom in reassigning them.

It is my hope that the Monarchy, no longer encumbered by partisanship, may assume a new rôle as mediator between parties during periods of acute political controversy. This hope depends, of course, on the popular understanding that my concessions are genuine and that my wishes are indeed for the blessings of fate to rest upon the whole Talossan nation. The eruption of partisan politics on this most vital issue would be grave indeed, and I implore everybody to understand and appreciate the sincerity with which I take this unprecedented and radical step out.

Sir Walter Bagehot identified the three rights of a constitutional monarch to be the right to be consulted, the right to advise, and the right to warn. As Talossa prepares to welcome a new Prime Minister as its leader, I invite him, and all of you, to work together with me to guarantee that Talossa is indeed "a community of persons having fun." To that end, as the Monarchy evolves into an independent pillar of government in its own unique right, it is our solemn hope as King that our own consultation, advice, and warning, building as they do on our own twenty-four year experience being a Talossan, might have their parts to play in healing this nation.

ROBERT I
of the House and Dynasty of Rouergue,
King of Talossa, etc. etc. etc.

This Speech from the Throne was supposedly aimed at fostering unity. Perhaps that was just what Ben wanted his detractors to think. If so, it failed miserably. The Opposition saw it as a Royal temper tantrum. The King's vendetta against Chris Gruber was our chief vocal gripe, but below it simmered a broader stew of discontent. We began to see that Ben had never really grown up from the fourteen-year-old who started Talossa in the first place and that his immaturity was more sinister than the seemingly-lovable and innocent way he had about him.

My November removal from office was seen almost as a coup. At the least, it was a shoddy way to thank me for my service. As for Chris, we saw Ben's rejection of him as an irrational, petulant, immature act based on personal hatred rather than an objective appraisal of Chris' ability to lead. Ben cited a lawsuit against then-PM Gruber, and the lost treaty with Penguinea. So? At least Gruber had not pretended to quit the Throne and his country as a transparent political maneuver—talk about leadership. The PC remembered the fire Chris had lit under the nation as PM from March 1998 to June 1999 and felt maybe it was time for a second Gruber administration. After all, in August 2000, the King had awarded Chris the *Per La Nazjun*, the Kingdom's highest honor! Surely Chris must have done *something* right.

However, *Per La Nazjun* was then. "F--k America" and the Madison-Gruber wars were now. Like the MN, the Progressive Conservatives were running out of options. The PC knew that Ben might have kittens over Gruber, but the prevailing attitude in the party was "Ben, get over it and grow up." Throughout the Halloween Crisis and what followed it, the PC felt, even to the founding of the Republic, that there was no rational cause for Ben to have rejected Gruber as PM. Of course, Gruber's Insult of 26 December complicated things (understatement), but that was still yet to come. Enter Prime Minister Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau, whose term in office lasted less than two weeks and accomplished almost nothing. While that term coincided with a bus strike in Max's home town that greatly inconvenienced him, he could have done what I should have months earlier and asked his Deputy to take the reins for a time. He did not.

The day things took a new course

(It is Talossan public record that Robert Ben Madison's mother passed away in her sleep in 1979, several months before the Founding of the Kingdom.)

The rest of Talossa was ready to let the feud die, but not Ben (see Witt X Thread 5755). What happened next was both inexcusable and provoked by Ben's icy, defensive Speech from the Throne of 26 December. Later in the thread spawned by that cold and remorseless oratory, there was this little gem:

[Gödafrüen:]> > The healing has already begun. But it is my humble opinion that the chief problem in this is that you and Chris Gruber cannot get along.

>

[Ben:]> Then Chris should leave. It would be good for everybody.

Hey - Ben. Maybe you should do what your mother did all these years ago.

- from **Poor Ben Madison. He just doesn't get it. (Witt X 7683)**, posted by **Retroradio Gruber**
on December 28, 2003 - 05:50

For a single moment in time, and perhaps for the first time ever, Talossa was stunned into speechlessness. Even with that in mind, to understand it, one must read the whole of Witt X Thread 7665. This thread, which is a great help in understanding the Halloween Crisis, may be found online at <http://www.talossaonline.com/1.7665.1.html>

The healing has already begun. But it is my humble opinion that the chief problem in this is that you and Chris Gruber cannot get along. I wonder what the next Ben Vs. Gruber election-time war will be about?? The two of you together are a self-regenerating bomb waiting to explode once more -- O joy and jubilation! Chris and Ben are debating again! That being said, I think Talossa *is* big enough and **needs** to be big enough for the both of you, and I hope that you two can settle your differences and move on.

Clearly there were mistakes on the part of many which contributed to this whole thing (in no particular order):

1. the love and affection showed between Chris Gruber and House Madison this year at TalossaFest (I refuse to mention any more names that that, but you know who you are.) :-/
2. The rather sloppy way I installed a government without consulting the relevant political parties -- mea culpa
3. Whatever misunderstanding there may have been concerning the Joint Statement
4. The whole mess with the scroll bar
5. The way I handled the notification of my resignation to the members of my coalition

There have been deep underlying tensions between many Talossans for a long time about [Ián Anglatzarà], the departed Liberals, the Adverts crisis, Maxime's controversial views, so-called "pocket votes", the breakup of the PC, and probably other things which I don't know about, underlying tensions the true breadth and sheer magnitude of which I was blissfully ignorant of until I became the nexus of Talossan politics upon becoming Prime Minister, tensions which I was, I confess, not ready to deal with. And frankly, all of these have soured me on Talossa, and your Speech, Your Majesty, does not help things with me. Rather, it brings all the stupidity of this past fall back to me, and posterity will read your Speech and believe me to be some sort of ne'er-do-well head of government who really did not care one whit about his country or his people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The thing I have learned the most about all this is that mis-steps and mistakes with working the "niceties" of dealing with people is in most cases somewhat inconsequential, but in any sort of politics where the lives of millions of people, the fate of millions of dollars, or even the fate of a community of about fifty is concerned, not dealing with people in "just the right" way, can have terrible and disastrous consequences. I think where this is concerned, we all in Talossa need to have a bit of grace towards one another with this, and I speak to myself here as much as anyone else.

My resignation and, partly, the way in which I handled it served to merely open the Pandora's box of pent-up feelings. This was further troubled by the fact that there was really no-one who was willing to replace me who had the broad support of most or all Talossans, though had [Quedér]'s university told him sooner about his class not being required, then perhaps much of this could have been averted.

It is interesting that, before my resignation came about in the public knowledge of Talossa, Talossa was peaceful and serene, and that afterwards, it was not. It leads me to believe that the time was not right for me to leave. However, the time for me was *not* right for me to stay on. What a cunundrum. Once I have resigned as Prime Minister, I shall go on holiday for a while. I shall have a much-reduced Wittenberg presence and, in the near-future, resign as SoS Whip and as Maricopa's Secretary of State, contrary to what I have said earlier. I shall also resign my seats in Cosà, but I will retain my seat in the Senäts and keep my Witt presence to where I can fulfill my duties as Senator. I keep my Senate seat for the sole reason that there is no-one else in my province willing (maybe) or able to take it.

As I said before, I need a break from Talossa "full-throttle", and, additionally, I shall return "full-throttle" when the time is right for me to do so, though I have no more thoughts of renunciation.

- from **the PM's reaction to the 26 December, 2003 Speech from the Throne (Witt X 7665)**,
posted by **Gödafríeu Válcadác'h** on December 26, 2003 - 14:11
Please note the date of this post: two days before Chris' insult involving Ben's mother.

[Gödafríeu (Witt X 7665):]> > 9. Talossans need to come to T-Fest and see each other face-to-face. Once we get to know each other better, "Halloween Crisis II" will be less-likely. And let's get Harry and Jean to a T-Fest! ;-)

[Ben:]> Unfortunately, Gruber showing up "face to face" was what led to the Halloween Crisis. The best thing for Talossa next year would be for Gruber to stay in Florida and work for Howard Dean and forget all about Talossa. We don't need TalossaFest 2004 to be the first fist-fight in the history of the Kingdom of Talossa.

Gruber's showing up is not what led to the Halloween Crisis. You and Amy's passive-aggressive lack of ability to confront Chris "face to face" (verbally), when you had a problem with him, was the cause of the "crisis". As for the first fist-fight in the history of Talossa, well I don't see that happening because that would require a real-time, real-space confrontation...which is not your forte. Clearly you only feel comfortable with "fighting" when you can do it in writing.

Let's get real Ben...if you can't write it, you can't fight it!

Rischâ Scovaglh

- from **RE: Baby steps toward reconciliation... (Witt X 7692)**, posted by **Lisa Skovalia**
on December 28, 2003 - 22:19

Can you say 'personality clash?' Halloween 2003 was not just based on politics and a broken agreement, folks. Ben's hatred of Chris Gruber was *personal*.

And Gruber's Ben's-mom-insult was the low point of their wars (at least up to that point). In response, I publicly repudiated my choice of Gruber as my Deputy Prime Minister and my successor. I don't regret that, but I do regret not coming to Ben's defense sooner and more often in response to some of Chris's cheaper shots. Too many of my remonstrances were in private, and even in private, I did not do enough.

Chris, I am sorry to do this, but you forced me into it. No, Ben has not had the same family difficulties as you, but jabbing him in the deepest recesses of his being as you did, even if it was merely a temper fit of yours, was wrong and cannot be rewarded. You were warned in private, more-than-once, I might add, about your personal insults, and you been doing a lot better recently, but with that one remark, you blew yourself out of the water with no hope of coming back.

Ben, do not gloat, and do not claim this as a victory. What I have come to realize this is the full depth of the personality clashes you have had and still have with many, many Talossans over many things. Know this, though, and my fellow PCers already know this: I agree with you 100% on the issue of "inactive" citizens and their inherent right to be Talossans in whatever way they want. No political party in Talossa has not benefited from the votes of even just one inactive citizen (Brent Kesler, Eric Minton, Jean Williams, Martin Bertagnon, Frederic Maugey...the list goes on and on...).

Perhaps, there was *at the time* (Quedier did not know about his class) *no one* in Talossa willing or qualified to succeed me. With Quedier's class schedule worked-out, we have at least one person both willing and qualified to do so. He is now set to assume office, and I could not be more delighted! He will make a wonderful Prime Minister.

Ben, you speak of "life-changes" going on with me. The life-change of which you speculate is the horrible thought in my mind that I may be "out-growing" Talossa. I am not outgrowing *Talossans*, but I *am* outgrowing the Talossan political sphere and/or getting utterly disgusted and burned-out with the whole mess.

And when did it really begin? It began with my de-facto SoS tenure of earlier this year and steadily got worse and worse---NOT AN INDICTMENT OF M-P---as the year has progressed to the point where I have been having great difficulty at times remembering that Talossa is more than just responding to umpteen internet disco board flames.

I love Talossa the most when I am talking about non-Talossan matters with Talossans, it turns out. Talossa gave me something I had never really had because I simply did not know at the time how to go about getting it: a real social life. And for that, I will always love Ben and all of you. Yet Chris may very well think that I am stabbing him in the back to score points with Ben, and I fear that my fellow Progressive Conservatives will think that I have stabbed Chris in the back and them as well.

It is clear that remembering the subtle nuances of every single Witt post and every single email as well as putting that together with the incredibly wonderful and complicated political history of Talossa and the minutiae of it all is something I have yet to master. I have also come to realize that many of the mistakes I have made and on which I keep harping ad nauseam have been caused by my lack of "chilling-out", stepping-back, and thinking things through and realizing what different paths I could take, and, in retrospect, could have taken. A

minor example of this was the Sausage PD (my little contribution to the more-bizzare aspects of Talossan lore -- ha, ha...). A huge example was the critical mistake I made in the handling of my resignation by not doing something I had always done with my coalition: treating the member parties as one big, huge party and dealing with all just in that very well whether it be emails or whatever. And when I think about it, there have been times when I have reverted to the "internet game" mentality I once had and had forgotten the real lives and real non-Talossan time commitments of all of us.

Ben and Chris are two individuals whom I regard as good friends, and they are not seeing eye-to-eye on this issue, and I am still convinced it is due to a misunderstanding between them and, more fundamentally, a serious personality clash between two hyper-articulate and hyper-bright geniuses -- both of whom I want to believe. But only one of them is right, and I believe it to be neither.

- from **Mr. Gruber, I have had it. No more. (Witt X 7693)**, posted by **Gödafríeu Válcadác'h**
on December 28, 2003 - 22:24

On 27 December, 2003, all Talossa heard Chris Gruber's opinion of Ben Madison in full for the first time.

You are a tiny, little man with a tiny, little life. You have added no value into the lives around you, instead choosing to take, take, take. You have stolen credit, shifted blame, and generally made yourself into a delusional child who never got over mommy's death. You live with an ancient crone who bosses you around and you call it a marriage. Your hermit father allowed his children to live with him long after any grown adult should, not because they wanted to be near him, but because they were obviously not equipped with the ability to face real life. Sure, Gödafríeu and Metáiriá live at home, but I'd bet that they'd be able to handle "the real world" just fine. Your life is a series of fuck-ups, missteps, and embarrassing events. You will be in the same exact place in another twenty years, because you are incapable of growing up.

It's sad, but what can anyone do to help you along? You retreat into your little pretend world (not the Talossa that actually exists, but the soft, warm, comfy Talossa in your mind) when things get difficult or bumpy. Too bad.

My slight mental illness has never really affected you except when I say things you do not wish to hear. It's too bad that, once again, you cannot face yourself proudly in a mirror and state unequivocally, that you are a real man. You are not a man; you are a man-child, forever trapped at 14 years old, blaming "sport-infested youth" and other assorted imagined bullies for your faults/behaviours/attitudes. You probably grew a beard to hide the fact that you are the Terminal Child. You insisted that 5'6" is not short (which it most certainly is), and then more recently you insisted that you were not 5'6" (which you are), all, it seems, as part of an attempt to deny your status as the Terminal Child. It's silly, it's stupid, and it's irresponsible.

You've never managed to win an argument without descending into trash-talking and bullying. You have yet to prove a single thing/crime/error that another has made outside of your imaginary ramblings. You are a spoiled brat. You always have been, you most likely always will be. Stomp your feet, smirk your smirks, dismiss any and all facts... whatever you like. That's what brats do.

- from **Baby? yes, Ben, you are... (Witt X 7680)**, posted by **Retroradio Gruber**
on December 27, 2003 - 19:55

Abiding by the terms of the Noodles Summit, Maxime resigned on November 27, 2003. Because the King was out-of-town that weekend, I was unable to take the Oath of Office (it had to be done either in person or by phone) from the King. Thus began Gary Lee Cone's first administration as Prime Minister. It lasted for a full four days, the shortest Prime Ministerial tenure in Talossan history. Cone was also only the second PM to have held office without ever taking the Oath, the first being Charles Sauls in 1998. On 1 December 2003, my second administration began. On 31 December, I resigned, and on New Year's Day Quedéir Castiglhá became Talossa's thirtieth Prime Minister.

Truth is stranger than fiction

Back in late October, Quedéir Castiglhá had been my logical successor to the PMship, but he had declined due to his course schedule at the University of Kansas.

[Gödafríeu:] > 3. When it came time to choose my successor, I was hoping Quedéir Castiglhá would be able and willing to take the PMship. Unfortunately, while he was willing, he because of his non-Talossan life was not able to do so.

You wanna know something really funny? The five-credit required class that turned a busy schedule into a hellish one and pretty much the reason I turned your offer down? No longer required! Ha ha! :-/

Quedéir Castiglhá

*The opinions expressed herein are mine. MIIIIIIINE!

RE: An Address to the Nation concerning all of this (Witt X 6382)
posted by **Quedéir Castiglhá** on November 17, 2003 - 12:40. Viewed 27 times.

All was well, and that was that. Like so many previous scuffles, the Halloween Crisis had blown over.

Or so I thought.

The faux-calm before the storm

The following Wittenberg excerpts bear notice, for Ben would use them later on in a way no one could have imagined:

[Ben:] >and now all the plotting and scheming for power during the Halloween Crisis and finally all these outbursts, including demanding that I be killed!

I never said anything about anyone killing you. I suggested that you die. However you choose.

-from **Moved post: courage(?)** (Witt X 7807)
posted by Retroradio Gruber on January 05, 2004 - 12:17

[Ián Metáiriá:] > > I'm hardly "calling for" anyone's "death," I'm calling on people to be active and involved and to vote once in a frickin' blue moon. Seems to me we have voter participation laws in the RT for good reasons, and those reasons are just as valid now as they were when the laws were passed in the first place.

>

[R. Ben Madison:] > I was not referring to you, but to Gruber, who has demanded my death.

I never demanded it. I *requested* it. Big difference. Don't be obtuse.

-from **Hoorah for stinkers!** (Witt X 7923)
posted by Retroradio Gruber on January 08, 2004 - 01:02

These Witt posts notwithstanding, the first two and a half months of the Castiglhá administration were mostly peaceful. At times, Chris and Ben went at it, but the Wittenberg X records from 1 January through 16 March 2004 show little fuss about Halloween. The spats documented therein are the same kind Ben used to have with the departed Liberals before they finally got sick of him and left. Things seemed to be getting back to normal.

However, a nagging voice in the back of my head kept telling me it wasn't over. Something far, far bigger was going on.

Only at the founding of the Republic was that nagging voice stilled.

A Nation Sundered

Part Three: Black Tuesday

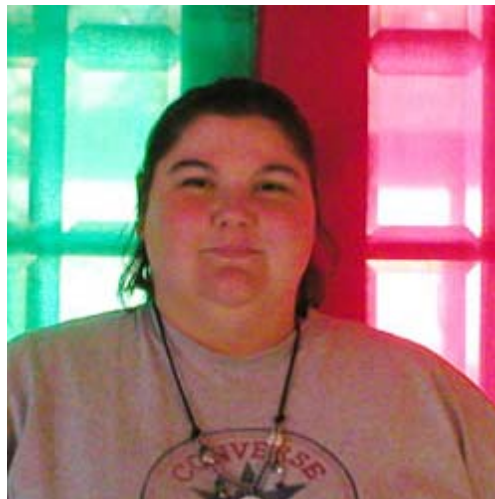
by

Gödafrieu Válcadác'h

*Signatory of the Compact of 19 May, 2004 and a Founding Father of the Republic of Talossa
Twenty-sixth and Twenty-ninth Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Talossa*



*Art Verbotten wearing the Royal crown of Talossa at TalossaFest 2003
Behind him is Brook Gläpfke*



Lisa Skovalia's official T-Fest 2003 photo

St. Patrick's Day, 2004

It was on this day the last gasp for the Talossa we had known began. The simmering tension between Wrath and Temper needed only a spark to ignite once more, and with this post by Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau, the incipit of Witt X Thread 9019, the war cranked up once more and began its downward trajectory toward its spectacular conclusion.

The opposition after the destruction of my gouvernement put back Talossa in the eternal statu-quo position.

The board show no more political debat or new important reform , statu-quo on immigration, new taxes and the so important reform of the monarchy after the depature and the come back of King I.

Cort Justice never really rules any verdict on the legality of seatgates even after Ken remarks on the Witt. The attack from a suppose neutral SoS on my gouvernement never investigated. The Gouvernement now in the hand of the MN is paralysed by the apathic PC.

Sorry to brake the fun but Talossa is now boring again.

Max_

Join the team support Charbonneau for the Senat Campaign 2003

Statu-Quo! (Witt X 9019), posted by [Maxime Paquin-Charbonneau]
on March 17, 2004 - 00:27

Ben raises the stakes

While throughout the first quarter of 2004, things on the surface seemed serene with the King, he was busy behind the scenes:

[M. A. Muth:] > I think what I object to is not the idea of having a higher class of citizen but rather the idea of stretching far back to hunt and search for potential criminal activity.

It's not that far back, it's a couple of years before he became a Talossan. The only reason I had Leon County do a background check in the first place, was that Gruber has threatened me with violence on Wittenberg. Sorry if you don't see it that way, but I don't think you know all the facts. E-mail me if you want some more facts. (Please send me your phone number, I think we should talk.) But you haven't been threatened in Talossa, and I have, so I took it upon myself to see if there was anything to Gruber's temper besides words, and, sure enough, there is--the man beats women.

- from **RE: Reply to MM** (Witt X 9945)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on April 11, 2004 - 14:24

What I did was conduct a routine background check. I sent a cheque for \$15 to the Leon County, Florida, Clerk of Courts, and obtained a partial printout of Gruber's criminal record. That was that.

There was nothing "private" or sinister about it. It all involves public records.

- from **RE: Madison, P.I.** (Witt X 10024)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on April 12, 2004 - 11:45

Wittenberg etiquette has always specified that, when reporting a source for the first time, one document that source. No one, no matter how trusted, is exempt from this common courtesy, even for the most trivial of news events or other things, unusual or otherwise. Bearing that in mind, kindly peruse the following Wittenberg posts:

[Andy Lowry said:]> Nor does it mean that his amazingly distasteful (I just can't come up with a phrase that expresses how I felt when I saw the stuff about your mother-- I'm not sure there are strong enough words in the language for it) insults are excusable.

It wasn't so much the slander against my mother that bothered me, it was his declaration that he wants me dead. Personally, I have absolutely no doubt in my mind that someone like Gruber is fully capable of murder. There is obviously some kind of moral line that is crossed when you call for someone else's death--that isn't politics, and it isn't even personal, it's... transdavronian. (I have trouble finding words to describe Gruber, too. ;-)

- R. Ben Madison, Witt X 7798 - reply to Witt X 7785
from **RE: Profiles in Talossan Courage**, posted by King Robert I on January 05, 2004 - 09:23

[RBM said:]> > As much as I may be shouting into the wind here, I remain politically independent and I am not necessarily committed to any party. But, I can't be morally neutral--when I see wrong in Talossa, and especially if nobody else wants to do anything about it, I won't be silent.

[Michael Pope said:]> Perhaps the reason that nobody else wants to do anything about it is that nobody else agrees that what you see is wrong - or even that what you see is necessarily what is really going on.

I am quite willing to accept that "nobody else" thinks death threats are a serious issue, even when they come from someone with a background of violent crime. I just happen to disagree. It's a free country.

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9828 - reply to Witt X 9199
from **RE: Let's take a breath, huh :)**, posted by King Robert I on March 23, 2004 - 11:50

[RBM said:]> I am quite willing to accept that "nobody else" thinks death threats are a serious issue, even when they come from someone with a background of violent crime. I just happen to disagree. It's a free country.

Death threats from someone with a background of violent crime. Right.

In that case, I might suggest that you go to the American authorities to get a restraining order against this violent criminal.

-Michael Pope, Witt X 9235 - reply to Witt X 9828
from **RE: Let's take a breath, huh :)** posted by Michael Pope on March 23, 2004 - 12:18

[RBM said:]> > I am quite willing to accept that "nobody else" thinks death threats are a serious issue, even when they come from someone with a background of violent crime. I just happen to disagree. It's a free country.

[Michael Pope said:]> Death threats from someone with a background of violent crime. Right.

You don't believe me. Why not?

> In that case, I might suggest that you go to the American authorities to get a restraining order against this violent criminal.

Already been done.

- R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9267 - reply to Witt X 9235
from **RE: Let's take a breath, huh :)**, posted by King Robert I on March 23, 2004 - 16:46

How do you have fun in Talossa? Bashing people. Knifing people in the back, calling people names, and generally being a con artist in this community because no other community will take you seriously. Do you know what it's like to get published in the real world and win the respect of your peers? Of course not, and you never will--all you can handle is Talossa. Gruber, what positive contribution have you ever made to Talossa, on your own? Publishing someone else's correspondence five or six years ago was a good thing, granted. But it wasn't your doing. The only reason you're here is to hurt people, to "cut people's balls off." Other than that, what have you ever accomplished in your life?

Oh, yeah. You beat up a girl. Be proud of that, it's all you have.

- R. Ben Madison to Chris Gruber, Witt X 9624, (, boldfacing mine)
from **RE: Criminal Gruber's Compulsive Lies**, posted by King Robert I on April 02, 2004 - 09:52

Chris, I think M-P has forgotten that you did issue an apology, some time ago, actually.

You are right in this sense: the particular comment being referred to in this series of posts was - in fact - NOT a "death threat" so much as a wish that someone would be "dead." It is one thing to say to someone "I wish you were dead," which is not a threat (though the recipient still *could* take it that way depending on other circumstances) and another thing to say "I'm gonna kill you!"

The latter is an unambiguous threat; the former is not.

Even so, this whole episode is bad and - as you know - was a major turning point in PC-GCP relations. But as you say, you have apologized and to keep doing so is silly, that is understood.

What seems to be happening is that the recipient of the "I wish you were dead" statement has, ever since, been ratcheting up the incident until it becomes a death "threat" of "murder," etc.

That is unfair to you and you have a right not to be silent when it's being repeated over and over again.

But be careful, you walk a fine line.

Ián Metáiriá

"Damn you! Damn you all to Hell!"

-Ián Metáiriá, Witt X 9330 - reply to Witt X 9329
from **RE: Why doesn't he?**, posted by Ián Metáiriá on March 24, 2004 - 17:42

Gruber is a dangerous, violent, unstable individual who "requests" my death. That will never change.

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9275 - reply to Witt X 9270
from **RE: Prime Minister Ernil**, posted by King Robert I on March 23, 2004 - 18:11

Ben had milked the Mother-Of-All-Insults (*no* pun intended) for every drop of tainted lactation the tortured teat would yield. Nearly all Talossa saw the Insult for what it was: a tactless, cruel way of saying "drop dead." Ben and Amy (previously a genuine victim of domestic abuse) saw it otherwise.

If the above cacophony of Wittenberg posts seems to make no sense, what Ben had done was dig up Chris' public court records. Whether this was done out of spite, or out of a sincere fear of Chris' becoming truly violent (even though he lived a thousand miles from Milwaukee), we may never know.

I said earlier that it was customary to back up statements on Witt with evidence. I challenge anyone to look through the Wittenberg records from 23 March to 11 April 2004, a period of time of more than two weeks, and find even one instance where Ben provided any reasonable way to get at the information he found.

Go ahead. I'll wait.

You didn't find any, right? That alone tells us that Ben's accusations against Chris weren't on the up-and-up. If I say to Joe Camel, "you beat up a girl," then offer no evidence, I commit libel.

[Ben:] > > > There was nothing "private" or sinister about it. It all involves public records.

>

[MPF:] > > Well, this isn't what I recall of the event, but I will have to dig up in my e-mails to find the source.

>

[Ben:] > I don't have the money to hire a private investigator in any event.

1. Money requires a job.

2. if you HAD the money, you WOULD hire one. And that's just sick.

> > Or was it on the phone ??? I also recall a phone conversation with you on this.

>

> > I also know other people have told me that you hired a PI.

>

> Jesus Christ, Martí-Pàir. The fact that other people lie about me should tell you more about them than it does about me!

BEn: you have been almost pathological in your lying. You have been lying about things that normal people don't even lie about. And then you introduce this bizarre idea that I am somehow a "violent offender" and a "woman beater" because of a temporary injunction.... that proves you CANNOT TELL THE TRUTH IF IT MAKES YOU LOOK WORSE.

You seem to be driven by some sort of need to hurt me, so much so, that you feel compelled to pay people money to look something up on me (which didn't reveal anything the public records didn't already reveal -- smart move), desperately trying to discredit me in any way you can.

you paint pictures of a bruised and battered Jennifer Mohny -- as if any such thing ever occurred. You don't know that anything like that happened, you just made it up.

Here's a tidbit for you Ben: Jennifer Mohny can kick your butt, my butt, and everyone in Talossa's butt. She's actually a pretty tough woman. You know how I know that? I've actually met her. I know what she's capable of. You don't.

YYou cling vehemently to a pair of words like a bulldog on a leg as if you've found the smoking gun that will turn Talossa against me. And when Talossa (save your little posse) fails to turn against me, you strike back at them, individually, trying to make these decent folks into some sort of villainous cabal. It's ridiculous.

And, now, for you to play the "Ben-as-victim" role, it comes off as sad and desperate. You're NOT the victim. Amy is NOT the victim. You got insulted. THAT'S IT. THAT'S ALL. I used an unfortunate bunch of words to try to get back at you for doing the same to me. Show me (and the rest of Talossa) what I specifically *did* that warrants your obsessive behaviour. Show me and Talossa what I *did* to warrant your "stalking", as you called it. Show me and Talossa what I *did* to warrant libel, defamation of character, and false accusations.

I called you names. Your response was to track down my past -- and pay money for it.

No-one has accused you of a crime you haven't committed. You've done that to ME.

- **Madison the Victim?** (Witt X 10034)

posted by Retroradio Gruber on April 12, 2004 - 13:26

[Ben:] > > I gave up partisan politics, but there are many other kinds of politics. This all boils down to a political question about what we want the Kingdom of Talossa to be all about. In this case, a Talossan has had his life threatened by another Talossan,

[Gödafrüeu:] > You have never responded to my "Challenges", now have you? :-/

Nope. Never even read it.

> >who shows no signs of giving up (especially when the rest of the national 'establishment' cheers him on at every turn and even, in this case, goes so far as to circumvent the democratic process in order to protect him). I have to conclude that this is the kind of Talossa you want to live in, a Talossa characterized not just by 'hot tempers' but by physical threats of violence,

> What threats??

I'm sorry, I can't help you. If you're willfully blind to the obvious, you're too stupid to be a part of this dialogue.

> >coming from people whose legal record shows that their 'tempers' do in fact lead to physical violence and not merely verbal abuse.

> You have yet to demonstrate proof of this.

I have shown you the legal proof. You choose to ignore it. That's your problem, not mine.

> > Now, John, if I am wrong, then perhaps there is room for common ground and a golden opportunity to make this whole issue go away for good.

> Yes, Ben, you *are* wrong, and I hope you can see the common ground: Gruber's insult concerning your mom being a hard and loooow blow (to put it mildly), but not a death threat;

That is not the issue. Making fun of my mother's death is not the issue--it is the specific call for my death that is the issue, the issue you choose to voluntarily ignore. "I suggested that you die.... I hoped for it.... I requested it..." etc.

> Gruber's lack of record for violence.

Tell that to Jennifer Mohny.

> >I will have some free time Saturday and Sunday. If you're available, let's please get together and see if we can't resolve this--and I mean genuinely, once and for all, resolve it.

> If this comes about, then maybe Resurrection Sunday can coincide with the resurrection of the Talossa I want to be a part of.

It will require a sacrifice. If Gruber is as holy and spotless as you make him out to be, I'm sure his sacrifice will be an acceptable one.

Ben

- **RE: RZ27 Injunction Notice-Justice Verbotten** (Witt X 9930)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on April 11, 2004 - 10:49

[Gödafrüeu:] > > Gruber's lack of record for violence.

>

[Ben:] > Tell that to Jennifer Mohny.

>

Ben, I assume that you think she is the "victim". If you really think that, then why are you releasing her name on the internet. She might not want that, but...oh that's right, you don't really care about her. All you care about is getting Gruber out of Talossa by any means necessary. If that means invading the privacy of people you don't even know, even when you believe those people to be "victims", well then so be it huh? I guess in your world, the ends justify the means.

- from **Ben doesn't care about alleged "victims" + other pertinent info** (Witt X 9937)
posted by Lisa Skovalia on April 11, 2004 - 12:55

[Lisa Skovalia:] > Ben, I assume that you think she is the "victim". If you really think that, then why are you releasing her name on the internet.

It's out there already. I'm not "releasing" anything.

> She might not want that, but...oh that's right, you don't really care about her. All you care about is getting Gruber out of Talossa by any means necessary.

Well, I do care about getting Gruber out of Talossa by any means necessary, as long as those means are ethical and legal. That's true. He is shit, and he doesn't belong here. I'm sorry that your self esteem is so low that you think that only he can provide you with whatever it is you're looking for, but believe me, you could do a lot better. I saw him being verbally abusive towards you several times just in the brief time you were here, and I can only imagine how he must treat you in private. Whether it's as bad as he treated her, only you two know. But abusers don't change, and the language he uses towards me--about how much he wants me dead, about how he's going to physically maim me, and so forth--is entirely consistent with someone who would beat up a woman. If you want to be his enabler, if you want to stroke his violent ego, that's between the two of you, but when he starts pouring that stuff into Talossa, then that's my business and I am going to make sure, one way or another, that it ends.

> If that means invading the privacy of people you don't even know, even when you believe those people to be "victims", well then so be it huh? I guess in your world, the ends justify the means.

Providing a link to a government website is not "invasion of privacy."

> Gee, that sounds like it could be a cleverly worded (so as to avoid legal prosecution) call for the death of Chris. Of course, Ben has been doing his almighty best to crucify Christopher now hasn't he?

Two of the three who were crucified that day deserved it. Talossa will be a much nicer place when the womanbeater is out of here. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could feel some sympathy for the victims of Chris Gruber?

Ben

- **RE: Ben doesn't care about alleged "victims" + other pertinent info** (Witt X 9944)
posted by [R. Ben Madison] on April 11, 2004 - 14:13.

Chris,

[Grubi:] > Of course, it did get handed down a few hours after I submitted my lawsuit. :-)

I guess.

I did not see your Cort materials until the next day.

I've sort of gotten afraid to open my e-mail lately, and not just Talossa stuff.

I've lost a few close friends recently, people that I went to school with who are all my age.

If I have copped a bit of a "Why are you all so stressed out about Talossa" attitude, it is because of this.

Anyway,

I went online that night for purpose of checking out Witt and seeing if I still had Cosa seats this month from the PC.

I ran into this legislation, saw red flags all over the place, and spent the next few hours delicately researching and writing my reply.

I'm sure Ben will view this response to your post as proof positive that we are somehow in bed (figuratively speaking) with each other Chris, but I've stopped asking myself "What will Ben think" after reading his virus posts.

I'm just doing my job as best I can, and if that is getting in his way, then he has the problem because I'm just trying to follow the rules like we wrote'em.

> So if this is the anti-PD, that makes you the anti-Gödafríeu Válcadác'h? :-D

No. I'm pretty wordy as well, although no where near as rambling as Gödafríeu can be. :-)

[**Art Verbotten:**] > > If you read my reasons for issuing this injunction I stated that it violated three OL covenants of freedom. That's huge.

>

> Yep. And possibly more. The 16th, for example.

More than one was too many. It's all kinda of moot right now but, I'll check it out sometime later this weekend.

> > You'll notice that Ben, the ghost author of this bill (I assume),

>

> Oh, he admitted it.

Not per se, but he defended it like one of his and apparently provided the research. Just read the post and see what you get out of it.

The things I found were:

Disagreement with him seems make a person an enemy of the state again.
This we've seen this before.

You've apparently been canonized!!!!

That's a new one. Didn't think you were Catholic

(If one of your miracles involves turning water into Bourbon, I'll be sending you a flask):-)

Otherwise, the verbose response and assault on me carry the familiar signature of previous attacks he's made on me when I've had the opportunity to be a road block for him as he tries to trample on rights we all agreed we would protect when we drafted the Organic Law.

The usual accusations of disloyalty and no jurisprudence as a Justice and politician are there as well. All this because I did not step aside and let this bill destroy due process.

On Wednesday, April 7th I celebrated my 19th Anniversary as a Talossan. I have been renominated to the Uppermost Cort 3 times by Ben, yet he still questions my loyalty and dedication to the country.

I just don't understand it.

Eif

- RE: **RZ27 Injunction Notice-Justice Verbotten** (Witt X 9909)
posted by Art Verbotten on April 10, 2004 - 03:01

The bill Verbotten speaks of is

32nd Cosá, RZ27

What follows is a blatant and brazen attempt by the Royals to throw a Talossan citizen out of the country on spurious charges.

RZ27 - The Violent Offences (Amendment) Act [VOID]

Published in Clark #5 [32nd Ziu, April, 2004]

Rejected by the ZIU

Uréu q'estadra sâ: Amy Durnford - (MN-Vuode)

This bill was subject to an injunction and is considered VOID

WHEREAS, the Kingdom of Talossa is a real community of real people, friends and relatives, in which real legal issues may sometimes become involved, and

WHEREAS, I am a survivor of domestic violence, and want to make sure that Talossa is not a "safe place" for perpetrators of violent crimes, and

WHEREAS, violent criminals have personalities and interests incompatible with democracy, and

WHEREAS, Talossa has a unique opportunity to actually be the "shining city on a hill" by enacting the "zero tolerance" pledges of politicians world-wide against violent crime:

THEREFORE, the Ziu hereby enacts, and places the following before the Talossan people at the earliest possible opportunity as a referendum, as Article XVII, Section 12 of the Organic Law:

Article XVII, Section 12: 1. For purposes of this Section, the term "violent crime" shall include armed robbery, arson, assault, battery, child molestation, domestic violence, mugging, murder, and rape.

2. All persons convicted of or subject to a restraining order for a violent crime, in a Talossan or foreign court of law, shall be classified in all official Talossan documents as Violent Offenders. Prosecutions obstructed by defendant's refusal or professed "inability" to be served warrants, etc., shall be considered convictions.

3. Violent Offender status is incompatible with good citizenship. The Talossan citizenship of all Violent Offenders shall, upon receipt of legal documentation by the Uppermost Cort, be null and void.

4. Violent Offenders may (re)apply for Talossan citizenship, but their applications must include a detailed confession of their violent crimes, with all applicable legal documentation appended, and the Cort and Ziu may take their Violent Offender status into account when voting on them.

archived from <http://talossa.net/bills.php?cosa=32&bill=27>

Azul!

When I was 8, I broke my one of my best friend's front teeth with my lunchbox. Does that count? But seriously,

1. Convictions of crimes are followed by sentencing. Once someone has served the sentence for their crime, it's over (unless it's a sexual-predator case). The U.S. government doesn't strip people of their citizenship for crimes, so why should we? (Yes, I know that people can be disenfranchised in some circumstances, but that's not the same as losing citizenship.)

2. Attempted prosecution of a crime is not the same as a verdict of guilt. A certain former Atlanta security gaurd, and a certain nuclear physicist of Chinese extraction, and a certain Army chaplain of the Muslim flavor, among others, could certainly attest to that.

I'm voting against this one, and I urge my fellow citizens to do the same.

Andy

Andrew Lowry
Minister of Immigration
Humorless Old Bastard
Not Wearing Pants, and Proud of It

-Andy Lowry, Witt X 9335 - new thread

- from **Another few words about RZ27**, posted by Andy Lowry on March 24, 2004 - 20:27



*Outside the Royal Consulate on 11 July, 2003
from left: Tomás, Gruber, Verbotten, and Andy Lowry
Chris is blocking Gary Cone and Andy is blocking Gödafríeu Válcadác'h.
The Consulate is to Tomás' back.*

Ben,

[RBM said:]> Frequently, an abusive spouse will violently beat his wife and then "disappear," leave no forwarding address, and sometimes even just not answer the door--thus prohibiting the police, process server, etc., from serving him a warrant, notice of a court date, etc. It is a gigantic loophole in the law. Criminals can deliberately avoid being prosecuted simply by making themselves 'unavailable.' This proposal of mine closes that loophole.

You're a bit naive about this, old chap. Once an arrest warrant is enacted, it doesn't matter how "unavailable" one makes oneself. I have personal experience with this fact. (No, not for a "violent crime".)

> The reason it's written the way it's written is key: Refusal to cooperate with law enforcement, by deliberately "not being at home" to avoid being served, is tantamount to an admission of guilt.

Firstly, when the cops come knocking with an arrest warrant, there ain't no such thing as "I ain't here."

Secondly, judgment of guilt is reserved to judges and juries, not your extremely odd "tantamounts".

Thirdly, the very last thing you EVER want to do, when actually accused of something, is co-operate with your accuser. Never heard of the Miranda decision? It's there for a very good reason.

Fourthly, it's interesting to note that you refer to the bill ostensibly proposed by Amy as "this proposal of mine". Perhaps "interesting" is not the right term. (Trying to think of other words-- dang, too bad I'ze just a toothless Ohio hillbilly what don't know no Thesaurus.)

Andy

-Andy Lowry, Witt X 9408 - new thread

- from **Repost: RZ27 hoo-ha: The Ben and I**, posted by Andy Lowry on March 27, 2004 - 02:39

[Gödafríeu Válcadác'h said:]> Yeah, I'll admit Chris was a bit exhuberant at TalossaFest, and yeah, he horribly insulted both Ben and Ben's mother's memory, but even the insult about Ben's mom does NOT excuse Ben's trying to dig up dirt on Chris.

Retrieving publicly-available information is not a crime, and is not even immoral. What is immoral, is making excuses for the criminal conduct of somebody who has threatened to maim a fellow Talossan and who has openly called for the death of a fellow Talossan. If you can't see that, there is little hope for you. I have to believe that you are excusing Gruber's conduct, and bashing mine at every turn, because you want Talossa to be a place where people like Gruber can flourish.

> And I haven't even begun to harp on about the beating-up-a-girl thing.

-

If you can't bring yourself to defend violence against women, then perhaps there is still hope for you, Gödafríeu.

Ben

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9669 - reply to Witt X 9652

- from **RE: Hey Ben!! Where's the proof?**, posted by Gödafríeu Válcadác'h on April 03, 2004 - 00:14

Gruber's past uncovered



RZ 27 was the culmination of two years of growing hatred on Ben and Amy's part going all the way back to the end of the PC Pot Pie Blob and Advertgate, though it is possible that "F--k America" was the starting point. Were they truly scared of Chris, or were they just trying to trump up charges in pursuit of a personal vendetta? Again, we may never know.

We do know this: the rest of Talossa saw the Insult as just that—a vile insult. The idea of a death threat was preposterous enough; how Chris was to follow through on such a threat from Tallahassee, Florida was never explained. In fact, Chris Gruber's 'violent past' never took place. You will find no evidence anywhere in the universe of Chris Gruber having a violent past because none has ever existed. Marti-Páir Furchéir finally found the documents Ben would not supply, and their content explains why he wouldn't supply them. These were in the jurisdiction of Leon County, Florida:

I did the search, the found the documents.

Here is the short version of the 6 documents returned

To do so, go here :

http://image.clerk.leon.fl.us/official_records/ and search for Gruber, Christopher.

6 records are returned :

Order dismissing temporary injunction.

Jennifer Mohney apparently had requested a temporary injunction against Mr Gruber, citing domestic violence. In Florida, such an injunction is automatic upon request until a permanent one is issued in the courts.

When in front of the court, Mrs. Mohney requested withdrawal of the injunction. No record indicate any other actions pressed by Mrs Mohney against Mr. Gruber.

Misdeameanor

- Petty theft, to much Gruber pleaded no contest.

This is the charge that he claims to have made while homeless.

He was NOT found guilty, but rather, the sentence was withheld.

This means, if it is the same as in Québec, that the Judge agreed to NOT declare him guilty but simply to fine him, because the offense was too small to condemn him, and that it was a first offence.

If like in Québec, this doesn't make the accused guilty, and in fact, you can be sued for Libel if you say that such a person is guilty of the crime, since he is not.

I don't know for Florida.

In any case, petty theft isn't a violent crime.

Failure to prosecute

Gruber was sued civilly by the Florida Commerce Federal, but they failed to sue him, so the case was dismissed.

The reason behind the original accusation isn't listed, but it is civil.

Notice of eviction

Gruber was evicted from an apartment. No reason is given.

Florida Commerce Credit union (2 reports for the same case)

Gruber is civilly requested to repay 395.24\$ to the credit union.

No reason is given.

Gruber was not present.

It must be the bounced check that was referred to...

Wittmeister
Secretary of State
Senator of Atatürk
Cosâ Member
Resident Miracle Worker
All around nice guy ;-)

-the entirety of **The documents...** (Witt X 9672)
posted by MP Furxhéir on April 05, 2004 - 12:02

On 11 April 2004, Ben emailed me this link along with instructions:

- 1) <http://www.clerk.leon.fl.us>
- 2) Click on “search court databases” (it’s hard to find!)
- 3) Type your name, hit “continue”
- 4) Type in “Gruber” and “Chris” and hit “search”

Here is another Wittenberg post:

1. The injunction against Gruber was put through on 8 November, 1994 and was dismissed on 9 January, 1995. Two months is not a very long time for a scenario of muffed hearing after muffed hearing. Non?

2. A look at the “costs” section details only the following: ** Converted Receipt Detail Summary ** Nov 8 1994 3:11PM: Receipt Number: 50373 Clerk: DAD Paid By: LEON COUNTY Tender: INF Amount: \$41.00 Costs: \$41.00 Copies: \$0.00 Dep Applied: \$0.00 Dep Received: \$0.00 Bond Received : \$0.00 Bond Applied: \$0.00 Check: \$0.00 Notary: \$0.00 Refund: \$0.00 Other 1: Other Amount 1: \$0.00 Other 2: Other Amount 2: \$0.00 If Ms. Mahoney paid court costs each time she re-filed (and there is no record on the Leon County website to that effect), then why are they not recorded here?

Dismissal after only two months, yet there was little or no cost to Ms. Mahoney. If there was really something of substance to her petition, why is there so little fuss and fuss to be found at the Leon County website? And why did she after two months have the thing dismissed outright?

Any thoughts, Ben? Amy?

Gödafríeu

-Gödafríeu Válcadác’h, Witt X 10055 - new thread

Questions for you, Ben, about You-Know-Who

posted by Gödafríeu Válcadác’h on April 12, 2004 - 17:39

> 1. The injunction against Gruber was put through on 8 November, 1994 and was dismissed on 9 January, 1995. Two months is not a very long time for a scenario of muffed hearing after muffed hearing. Non?

>

> 2. A look at the “costs” section details only the following: ** Converted Receipt Detail Summary ** Nov 8 1994 3:11PM: Receipt Number: 50373 Clerk: DAD Paid By: LEON COUNTY Tender: INF Amount: \$41.00 Costs: \$41.00 Copies: \$0.00 Dep Applied: \$0.00 Dep Received: \$0.00 Bond Received : \$0.00 Bond Applied: \$0.00 Check: \$0.00 Notary: \$0.00 Refund: \$0.00 Other 1: Other Amount 1: \$0.00 Other 2: Other Amount 2: \$0.00 If Ms. Mahoney paid court costs each time she re-filed (and there is no record on the Leon County website to that effect), then why are they not recorded here?

>

> Dismissal after only two months, yet there was little or no cost to Ms. Mahoney. If there was really something of substance to her petition, why is there so little fuss and fuss to be found at the Leon County website? And why did she after two months have the thing dismissed outright?

>

> Any thoughts, Ben? Amy?

>

> Gödafrüeu

>

Actually if you look under the Summary, Dockets, Dispositions, and Costs tabs, you will see that this was an “indigent” case, that the first event on the docket was the plaintiff’s filing of an “affidavit of insufficient funds” (which is all you have to do in Florida to get a free injunction), and that the injunction filing fees were dismissed because they were “Paid by: LEON COUNTY.” Thus, the plaintiff did not have to spend any of her inheritance to pay for this injunction.

And as I keep pointing out, but no one will respond to, here are the criteria for filing various types of injunctions and I see nothing that says a domestic violence injunction requires an act of violence or a threat of violence to have been committed. I assume that for an injunction to be made permanent, there would need to be some proof of violence, but I just don’t see where that is a requirement to file for a temporary injunction.

From the Leon County clerk of Court’s website:

What is an injunction?

An injunction is a court order, also referred to as a restraining order, that directs a person not to have any contact with you.

What are the requirements for filing a Petition for Injunction?

For domestic violence, this action is available if the respondent presently resides with you, or has lived with you in the past as a member of the family, such as a spouse, former spouse, person related by blood or marriage, person who has lived together with you as though he/ she were your spouse, or person with whom you have had a child, even if you have never lived together.

For repeat violence, this action is available if you have been a victim of assault, battery or sexual violence by the respondent at least twice within the past 6 months. The following conditions should also be met: (1) you and respondent are not related by blood; (2) you and respondent have no children together; and (3) you and respondent have never lived together.

For sexual violence, this action is available if (1) you have reported the sexual violence to a law enforcement agency and are cooperating in any criminal proceeding against the respondent, and (2) the respondent who committed the sexual violence was sentenced to a term of imprisonment in state prison and the term of imprisonment has expired or is due to expire within 90 days following the date the petition is filed.

For dating violence, this action is available if you and respondent have, or have had, a continuing and significant relationship of a romantic or significant nature, which is determined based on consideration of the following factors: (1) The dating relationship existed within the last 6 months; (2) the nature of the relationship is characterized by the expectation of affection or sexual involvement between the parties; and (3) the frequency and type of interaction must be based on the parties involvement over time and on a continuous basis during the course of the relationship.

Where can I obtain an injunction?

During normal working hours, the Petition for Injunction should be filed with the Family Law Division of the Clerk’s Office, Room 153, Leon County Courthouse. There are currently no costs associated with injunctions.

I’m still awaiting an answer.

Rischâ Scovaglh

-Lisa Skovalia, Witt X 10058 - reply to Witt X 10055

from **RE: Questions for you, Ben, about You-Know-Who** posted by Lisa Skovalia on April 12, 2004

- 19:17 [Italics are mine and denote text taken from the Leon County website text]

If you have any further doubts about the innocence of Chris Gruber, this thread should put your mind at ease.

I searched for -- and found -- the PDF version of the injunction dismissal online -- at the link Gödafrieu provided. Here's the text of that dismissal. The PDF itself is [here](#).

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL COURT
IN AND FOR LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

JENNIFER MOHNEY,
Petitioner,

V.S.
CHRISTOPHER C GRUBER,
Respondent

CASE NO. 94-5380

ORDER DISMISSING TEMPORARY INJUNCTION

AFTER due notice to all parties, a final hearing was held on this date to consider Petitioner's request for an Injunction against domestic or repeat violence. And the Court finding that:

Respondent was present...(or was not [petitioner's initials] if checked)

AND

() Petitioner failed to appear

*([Petitioner's initials]) **Petitioner appeared and requests dismissal.***

() Petitioner appeared, but the evidence fails to sustain the allegation in the Petition.

() Other: NON SERVICE.

Upon consideration thereof, it is ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that:

This Action is hereby DISMISSED and the Filing Fees and Service Process Fees of \$95.50, if not already paid shall be paid by Petitioner (____ if checked) or Respondent (____ if checked) to the Clerk of the Court within 30 days of this Order. If Petitioner paid the costs at filing, then the Clerk shall promptly refund the cost to Petitioner upon payment by the Respondent, if the Respondent is ordered to pay. If the party ordered to pay the court costs does no pay within the time set forth in this Order then upon the filing of an Affidavit, the Court shall render a Judgment for the unpaid fees. A copy of the affidavit and Judgment shall be mailed to the last known address of the party ordered to pay.

DONE AND ORDERED in Leon County, Florida, this 9 day of Jan, 1995.

(signed)

JOHN E CRUSOE -- Circuit Judge

Check the link if you don't believe me.

Also, Ben wants to make the following "proof" that I am "vile":

11/8/1994: AFFIDAVIT OF INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

11/8/1994: ** Converted Receipt Detail Summary ** Nov 8 1994 3:11PM: Receipt Number: 50373 Clerk: DAD Paid By: LEON COUNTY Tender: INF Amount: \$41.00 Costs: \$41.00 Copies: \$0.00 Dep Applied: \$0.00 Dep Received: \$0.00 Bond Received: \$0.00 Bond Applied: \$0.00 Check: \$0.00 Notary: \$0.00 Refund: \$0.00 Other 1: Other Amount 1: \$0.00 Other 2: Other Amount 2: \$0.00 Comment: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

11/8/1994: PETITION FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE Amount Owed: \$41.00 Paid Before Conversion: \$41.00 Receipt Number:

11/8/1994: FINANCLAL AFFIDAVIT

11/8/1994: INFORMATION ON RESPONDENT

11/8/1994: TEMPORARY INJUNCTION AND NOTICE OF HEARING 11/21/94 AT 9:00

11/21/1994: COURT MINUTES

11/21/1994: ORDER RESETTING HEARING ON PETITION FOR INJUNCTION, 12/5/94 AT 9:00

12/5/1994: ORDER RESETTING HEARING ON PETITION FOR INJUNCTION, DECEMBER 19, 1994 AT 9:00

12/6/1994: COURT MINUTES

12/19/1994: ORDER RESETTING HEARING ON PETITION FOR INJUNCTION, 1/9/95 AT 9:00 AM

12/20/1994: COURT MINUTES

1/9/1995: ORDER DISMISSING TEMPORARY INJUNCTION (PETITIONER APPEARED AND REQUESTED DISMISSAL, RESPONDENT UNABLE TO BE SERVED)

1/9/1995: COURT MINUTES

1/11/1995: INJUNCTION PAPERS RETURNED FROM SHERIFF'S OFFICE, NO SERVICE, JUDGE DISMISSED CASE ON 1/9/95 AT PETITIONER'S REQUEST

Despite the fact that Ms Mohney knew where I was on December 24, 1994, when I called her to see how she was doing (because I didn't know she had any injunction against me), I was somehow NOT SERVED. Despite the fact that there was never a crime charged against me, there was never proof of a crime, there was never anything like that -- somehow, in Ben's mind, I am "vile", etc.

He claims this is EXACTLY what amy went through, when he knows it is not.

I assume he also knows that Florida and Wisconsin laws are DIFFERENT. Or maybe he doesn't.

"[T]he Gruber Commission Report... is easily the best example of legal research and scholarship in the history of this country." -- Ben Madison, 5 Nov 2003

The Injunction Dismissal. (Witt X 9977),
posted by **RetroRadio Gruber** on April 11, 2004 - 18:42

> ([Petitioner's initials]) Petitioner appeared and requests dismissal.

For what reason? Answer:

>() Other: NON SERVICE.

> Despite the fact that Ms Mohney knew where I was on December 24, 1994, when I called her to see how she was doing (because I didn't know she had any injunction against me), I was somehow NOT SERVED.

Yep, "somehow." Compounding your lies isn't going to get you out of this hole, Chris. How do we know she knew where you were? 'Cuz I say so.' How do we know you called her 'to see how she was doing'? 'Cuz I say so.' Just a friendly chat, eh?

> He claims this is EXACTLY what amy went through, when he knows it is not.

Legally, it is. Except that Amy was lucky enough to get the police from a different jurisdiction to haul her ex-husband's sorry ass into court.

Ben

RE: The Injunction Dismissal. (Witt X 9980)
posted by **[R. Ben Madison]** on April 11, 2004 - 18:58.

> > ([Petitioner's initials]) Petitioner appeared and requests dismissal.

>

> For what reason? Answer:

>

> >() Other: NON SERVICE.

>

> > Despite the fact that Ms Mohny knew where I was on December 24, 1994, when I called her to see how she was doing (because I didn't know she had any injunction against me), I was somehow NOT SERVED.

>

> Yep, "somehow." Compounding your lies isn't going to get you out of this hole, Chris. How do we know she knew where you were? 'Cuz I say so.' How do we know you called her 'to see how she was doing'? 'Cuz I say so.' Just a friendly chat, eh?

Yes. She never made any mention of any legal injunction.

> > He claims this is EXACTLY what amy went through, when he knows it is not.

>

> Legally, it is. Except that Amy was lucky enough to get the police from a different jurisdiction to haul her ex-husband's sorry ass into court.

Ben, what reason do you present multiple times that Ms Mohny dropped the injunction? You claim she wouldn't put up the money each time. Fact is -- and the timeline proves it -- she DIDN'T HAVE TO. She signed an affidavit saying she didn't enough money. **If she was able to file for free, then why would she specifically drop the injunction?**

WHY, BEN? And who says she called for multiple hearings? The Court called for hearings, she knew where I was, THE COPS KNEW WHERE I WAS, and yet I was never served. And, coincidentally, she *specifically* dropped the injunction.

Yeah, Ben. Sure: it's only my word. Riiiiight.

"[T]he Gruber Commission Report... is easily the best example of legal research and scholarship in the history of this country." -- Ben Madison, 5 Nov 2003

RE: The Injunction Dismissal. (Witt X 9981)

posted by **Retroradio Gruber** on April 11, 2004 - 19:07.

Food for thought

If Chris' past really was violent, and after the supposedly-violent offenses Ben accused him of, why was he given custody of his son later on?

What Coop had to say

I only know for Indiana, but I assume that they're basically the same as Florida's, given the information on the Leon County Website. In Indiana, a person need only allege fear the individual will do harm to them for a temporary injunction to be provided. However, a court date is set, and the individual requesting the injunction *must* appear in court and give proof that the injunction is necessary. Failure to appear in court, or provide sufficient information for the judge to feel the injunction is necessary, negates the injunction.

The idea that an allegation holds the same legal weight as an injunction granted following appearance in court and proof provided the judge, is ridiculous in the extreme. Yes, there are women who are battered, but there are also false allegations aplenty when no proof is required for the initial injunction. I know, I've seen them. Having had a majority of women in my employ over the years, I've seen more than a few of them, both true and false. It is up to a sitting judge to issue an injunction based on facts.....not conjectures. Ben is not a sitting judge and has only tenuous information yet is jumping to some really juvenile conclusions.

BTW, in the state of Indiana, an legal injunction issued by a judge, need only have certain methods tried to contact the person the injunction concerns, the injunction remains in legal force regardless of the individual's notification of the injunction, this is to protect the individual who filed the injunction.

That said, I don't agree with what you said Gruber.....I think telling someone to "drop dead" is just fine, happens all the time, and rarely matters.....however, bringing his mom into it was extremely hurtful and harsh, I'm not really surprised at his reaction. I know how I would feel.

However, there is no way I would hunt down information on you on the web or anywhere else. I think that is way beyond the pale, and has kept me from coming back to Witt in any capacity. Guys, I didn't join Talossa so someone if they got mad at me could use my personal information to due background, or any other kind of check on me. The fact that it's happening, has left me cold, and I do not intend for the same thing to happen to me. I came here for fun.....honestly it's been a whole lot less than fun, because if it's not Gruber, it's someone else....and I'm tired of it. So, I'm hereby demanding that any information containing my any personal information be stricken from anything to do with Talossa. If and it's a very big if I'm sure....if I can do that and remain in Talossa fine.....but if not delete everything. I've had enough megalomania in my life without it here too..Please advise me of action taken, and good luck guys....you're gonna need it.

-Bill Cooper, Witt X 10061 - reply to Witt X 10058

the whole of **RE: Questions for you, Ben, about You-Know-Who**, posted by Bill Cooper on April 12, 2004 - 22:32



Chris Gruber with Howard Dean in October, 2003

An extra wrinkle

Azul, loyal Talossans!

Just a brief pop-back to explain my recent (and impending) absence from Wittenberg.

First (to do things backwards) the impending part: Friday I leave for Independence, Missouri, for Church business. I'll be back in a week's time. Depending on the internet reliability of my gracious hosts, I might be able to pop back on a temporary basis while I'm gone.

As for my recent absence: A couple months ago, while a certain unnamed individual was "requesting" my death and vowing to "chop my balls off," I experienced a vast increase in 'viral' activity on my personal computer. This culminated, despite my purchase of expensive and time-consuming software, in the complete meltdown of my machine early last week. After \$150 worth of work, it was up and running again, and then RZ27 was proposed. Within two days, my machine had melted down again. What an interesting coincidence. The tech guys that fixed my machine assure me that only someone with "a lot" of computer savvy, and malicious intent, would be capable of sending the kinds of viruses and other annoyances that recently blew my computer. Gee, I wonder who that could be. Someone with a history of violent crime, cheque fraud, and theft, and an oft-publicized desire to hurt me? Eh, perhaps, perhaps not. We shouldn't jump to conclusions, after all.

I am now armed with a lot more expensive filter stuff and hopefully can withstand the latest barrage. But we're thinking of changing our e-mail address, although the chance of keeping it secret in a place like Talossa is next to none. We'll just have to keep fighting, I guess. What a cheery place this country has become.

See you all in a week if not sooner!

Ben

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9610 - new thread

My Momentary Lack of Witt, posted by King Robert I on April 01, 2004 - 20:08

Ben & Amy,

If the the two of you knew what you were talking about regarding viruses I would sympathize.
If you had anything other than allegations without proof I would do the same.
The number of ancient programs that Ben likes to run on that machine make it a security nightmare.

Before accusing anyone for ignorance to the issue please answer this:

Did you have a firewall running on your machine?
Did you run anti-virus software?
Was that virus software updated automatically every time you started the machine?

Did you open e-mails from Chris or people you were suspicious of?
Did you go to websites of Chris's and accept any unusual cookies?

Have you been updating your operating system regularly?
Windows has released about 50 patches for it's ops systems this year alone.

Any answer of "NO" is the problem, not Gruber.

Am I defending Chris.
Right now YES.

The halloween crisis was just that. It took place around Halloween.
Here it is the 2nd of April and you are still obsessing about what was nothing more than name calling.

That's right name calling.
No blows were thrown, just allot of bad words from both sides of the issue.

Grow up.

Some of us use to use Talossa as a get away.

You are dragging your personal paranoias into this system that was meant for politics, not childish games that only seek to ruin adult lives.

Chris may be an asshole but at least he know how to move on.
Can't seem to recall him badgering you recently, so why are you still hung on it?

I do not come here to fucking babysit.
None of us do and now it seems like that is all anyone has been doing recently.

This red hot vendetta is turning this country into another bug nation.
We are suppose to be above that.

Time for everyone, including, especially the royals to elevate themselves from the mire of this petty bullshit.

One pissed off Eif

-Art Verbotten, Witt X 9469 - reply to Witt X 9610

RE: My Momentary Lack of Witt, posted by jk Verbotten on April 02, 2004 - 19:04



Ben (at left) debates with Art Verbotten at the Living Cosâ on 12 July, 2003

Ben's mind about Chris Gruber

[Gödafríeu Válcadác'h said:]> At the time, I was truly unaware of just how much you and he got along at T-Fest ;-).

A lot of my behaviour at T-Fest was trying to put the best face on things, because I didn't see any point in not trying to put the best face on things. Gruber just revealed himself to be selfish, obnoxious and abusive. Poor Lisa having to put up with his antics, his constant telling her to "shut up," and having to listen to her stories about how Gruber is mooching off her to get by. His refusal to drive you to our house (and refusal to notify us that he wasn't coming), his trying to order Amy out of the living room so he could watch Talossa videos, and his constant interruptions and craving to be the centre of attention around the table at the Greek restaurant... and his unexplained disappearances and refusal to keep to any sort of schedule when we had stuff to do (like take the Talossa tour) just revealed him to be a loathsome person.

Loathsome, but competent--which is why I figured as long as I had to deal with him online exclusively, I still felt comfortable asking him to be on the Cort, since I knew he wanted the job and he's a good writer when he isn't spewing obscenities. Then his real personality came out when he tried to knife you in the back. (An incident that I don't believe I ever saw you express any outrage at!) And it was all down hill from there.

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9275 - reply to Witt X 9270

RE: Prime Minister Erni!, posted by King Robert I on March 23, 2004 - 18:11

[Gödafríeu Válcadác'h said:]> which really, I think, boiled down to a clash of personalities between you and Chris. "Seatgate" only added to the fun, and Chris' particular insult concerning your mom was, I can safely guess, an unforgivable offense, as far as you are concerned. If it was truly unforgivable, I cannot blame you.

Well, Gödafríeu, THAT is progress! I don't recall ever hearing you say it quite like that. So now, at least, we both understand that there is a REASON for this schism, and that it is his fault. And by the way, it's not that what he said was unforgivable. Whether I forgive him in my heart is between me and the Lord. The broader question is: Are such insults acceptable in a civil society like Talossa? At what point does a person become so obnoxious, that their very presence is an affront to the nation's dignity? I think Chris has crossed the line so many times, he has clearly invalidated himself as a worthy Talossan. It's not a question of forgiveness, it's a question of what kind of a society do you want Talossa to be? Clearly the PC is uncomfortable with the idea of setting standards (at the very least) and perhaps even quietly endorses and approves Gruber's comments, hoping they will drive away the faint of heart.

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 9275 - reply to Witt X 9270

RE: Prime Minister Erni!, posted by King Robert I on March 23, 2004 - 18:11

What has Ben been carping about all along?

[Ben:]> A statement from you that you did, in fact, commit the GCP to the Joint Statement, and that you backed out of it, would completely wash away the whole root of the problem, because that is where it all started, all those months ago. Everything stemmed from that one incident, and grew from there.

My God, is that what this is all about?

You've turned Talossa upside down over that stupid Joint Statement? You've levelled false charges, engaged in McCarthyistic tactics, denounced most of the Kingdom - all because of a statement that is, to everyone save yourself, a trivial piece of history?

Your exhaustive Stot chronology aside, NO-ONE CARES about that Joint Statement.

> > [Gruber:] Furthermore, Talossa is becoming a place where my friends cannot be happy anymore. That is beyond upsetting; it is now tragic. I hope this can be remedied.

>

> [RBM:] With the establishment calling for my head on a platter, I don't know if it can.

I know one way it can be...

Michael Pope
Minister of Foreign Affairs
National Archivist
President, Progressive Conservative Party
Publisher, Talossan National News
Hipster Doofus
Humblest Man on Earth

"There's room to move as a fry cook. I could be manager in two years."

-Michael Pope, Witt X 10140 - reply to Witt X 10109

RE: Chris, Thank You, posted by Michael Pope on April 13, 2004 - 13:06
boldfacing is mine

"I know one way it can be..." alludes to ongoing talk among the PC and disaffected ZPT members of expelling and/or dethroning the King--or just seceding altogether.

[Ben speaking to Gruber:] I never asked for an apology, just a statement that you had agreed to the Joint Statement, and that you backed out of it. Nothing more. What I wanted you to make a statement agreeing to, what exactly what you said to me in your e-mail of 30 October 2003, in which you said, of the Joint Statement: "I like it, but I would ask that you add Andy [Lowry]'s name to the list, since he is in the GCP and is a part of all our proceedings." All I am asking is a statement from you that you accepted the Joint Statement and put your names to it. All I asked for was a note from you acknowledging the facts, not any admission of guilt or confession of 'deviousness'.

-R. Ben Madison, Witt X 10116 - reply to Witt X 10113

- from **RE: The apology that wasn't an apology**, posted by King Robert I on April 13, 2004 - 11:22

Black Tuesday: 13 April, 2004

During the night of 12-13 April 2004, Bill Cooper and Art Verbotten renounced their citizenships in the Kingdom of Talossa. These two events finally opened my own eyes. They marked the beginning of my own Talossan awakening: the moment my Talossanity became independent of Ben. Coop's words in particular hit me like a flash of lightning:

What you said was bad Grubi, no doubt. But what Ben is doing about it is worse imo.....being yelled at is one thing, even when it brings up a loved one who has died, believe me I know. Were it only your vitriol to worry about I probably would have stayed, but honestly, Ben checking your background out as a means to dump you from Talossa, makes me sick. Ben evidently believes that two wrongs make a right, except that he is never wrong is he?

Grubi, you and I both know that had it not been you.....tho you kind of put yourself in that position ;p, Ben would have found someone else who didn't pass his muster and do everything he can to get them out of Talossa. Just like the Liberals just because they didn't bend down and kiss his ass. And the group before that, and the group before that. Ben likes enemies, he makes so many of them, according to him.

While I don't agree with the way you insulted Ben.....what Ben is doing as a result is scary. What's to keep him from doing it to any Talossan citizen who gets on the bad side of him. Like I said in another post, all I have is a traffic ticket issued in Kansas sometime in 82.....maybe 83. But, that still doesn't mean I have to condone him looking into yours or any one else's personal records.

Even after all the time that's passed since I was on (and actually I've been reading posts for the last several months....putting off reappearing), I've had enough of Ben to last me for a good long time. This was supposed to be fun.....at least that's what the website says, Ben has made it less fun for quite a few people.....and not just with you....I'm sorry, but I don't believe Michael Pope is a liar, and Ben saying he is has pissed me off.....same with M-P, same with Gödafríeu Válcadác'h, and with your girl friend (sorry gf I can't remember the name...but it's old age ;p), who obviously knows more about it than Ben can ever hope to....and is really good at posting ;).

Gosh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean for this to be a book.....nor to discuss how I feel more than the post requesting my info be removed. But, I don't want this kind of Talossa, since it doesn't seem to be on it's way to changing, I am removing myself. Good luck Grubi and thanks ;)

-Bill Cooper renouncing his Talossan citizenship, Witt X 10068 - reply to Witt X 10063

RE: Questions for you, Ben, about You-Know-Who

posted by Bill Cooper on April 12, 2004 - 23:16



[Bill Cooper said:]> What's to keep him from doing it to any Talossan citizen who gets on the bad side of him.

Good question.

Today it is Grubi. Tomorrow it will be me. Or M-P.

Unless we put a stop to it.

Michael Pope
 Minister of Foreign Affairs
 National Archivist
 President, Progressive Conservative Party
 Publisher, Talossan National News
 Hipster Doofus
 Humblest Man on Earth

"There's room to move as a fry cook. I could be manager in two years."

-Michael Pope (pictured above-left with Chris Gruber at Reagan National Airport on 31 July, 2004),
 Witt X 10142 - reply to Witt X 10068 **RE: Questions for you, Ben, about You-Know-Who**
 posted by Michael Pope on April 13, 2004 - 13:16

In referring to M-P above, Michael alludes to the continual charges of corruption leveled by the King toward Marti-Páir regarding Electiongate.



What Bill said.

I just spent an hour constructing a farewell letter to you folks using his post as a basis because he captured the way I feel pretty darn well. the server than logged me out when I posted it so it is gone.

Here's the reader's digest version.

I quit to.

I have spent the past few months contemplating a comment made by a fellow PC'er who stated that without Ben, the rest of us seem to get along quite well. There are differences, but we are not at each others throats. Eliminate the Ben-spin on party contacts and there is some degree of harmony.

I have also been dealing with the untimely deaths of two very close friends, watching my mother recover from cancer treatment, and my sister deteriorate from MS.

Who goes through this and remains completely unchanged?
Who has time for the bullshit that is currently posted on Wittenberg.

I go there and see that some insignificant pipp I knew from High School is calling me an idiot because I will not indulge him in his 6 month campaign of hate against someone who told him to "drop dead".

I have better things to worry about in my life.

The Talossa I loved completely died when Ben & Amy, who apparently have way to much time on their hands but an ample suply of money and paranoia, started inflicting themselves other people's (Grubi's)personal lives claiming he was threatening them even though he lives over 1000 miles away.

This is unspeakable.
A man's room is his castle.
Seems to only be for Ben.
Everyone else is subject to his fascist whims.

Now reread Bill cooper's post again.

go ahead, I'll wait.

Those last lines where he asks to have all his information removed.
I request the same.
Remove all my info and strike my name from your rolls.
I will be deleting all Talossan e-mails as well.

I formally rescind my citizenship from this fascist vitriolic hell hole.

Eif

We are to other nations what "crab delights" are to seafood.

-Art Verbotten (pictured above) renouncing his citizenship, Witt X 10082 - reply to Witt X 10068

RE: Questions for you, Ben, about You-Know-Who

posted by Art Verbotten on April 13, 2004 - 03:34

Now we in the PC and Grey Congress began to understand what the departed Liberals and the Penguinians before that had been up against with Ben. We realized that Ián Anglatzarâ was not the demon Ben said he was. Now we were enduring the same trials they had gone through.

Talossa, a wounded nation, was bleeding out. Many of us doubted it would recover. However, and thankfully, things did not fall apart completely, as you will soon see.

At this point, I realized that I could no longer in good conscience tell anyone: "Talossa is a worthwhile place to join and be a part of." That moment for me was the turning point: the end of my old Talossanity.

I should add one more matter of concern, one the Kingdom chose not to deal with. Read this post well, and ponder on how a situation like this would be treated in any other civilized country.

When my dad was a Senator, he would often just hand the Clark back to me and say he trusted me to vote the right way. I had his permission to vote, but I hated it--because it wasn't really what the principle of the law was all about. Why the hell do you think Amy is the Senator from Vuode now, and not my dad? Because Amy enjoys doing the job, and doesn't see it as a chore. If I were the cartoon that you've drawn of me, my dad would still be Senator. But I wasn't comfortable with that, and as soon as someone else presented herself for the job, my dad and I were both happy to oblige.

-from **RE: Literacy Tests (Witt X 11749)**

posted by [R. Ben Madison] on May 16, 2004 - 20:58

If Ben ghost-voted like this for Harry Madison in the Senäts, even with Harry's full consent, it stands to reason that he could do the same in a general election. Just how involved had Harry and Jennifer, Ben's sister, been with Talossa in recent years? Jennifer and Harry had always cast their votes by way of Ben. And Ben had been heretofore trusted to have actually polled them. And as Deputy Secretary of State, he was fully authorized to collect election votes from whomever. He was answerable to no one but the Secretary of State. At the time, we had yet to think of a remedy for this, but it would soon come.

The above Wittenberg post fueled the dissenters' bonfire of suspicion, born of Ben's attack on the Grey Congress in the aftermath of the Joint Statement fiasco. Ben had advanced three clearly unqualified candidates to succeed me as PM. He had sacked me from the job with little dignity. He had upped the ante on Gruber's Insult, morphing it into a death threat. We could see that, where Chris Gruber was concerned, Ben Madison was unable to think objectively.

The question of the integrity of the votes of Harry, Jennifer, Frederic M., and others traditionally collected by long-time Deputy Secretary of State Ben Madison was in doubt for the first time. Secretary of State Furxhéir, as was his right under the Organic Law, rescinded Ben's authority to collect votes (Witt X 10906). He published a set of rules for the upcoming 33rd Cosâ election whereby each voter had to contact M-P personally and directly, one of the communication methods being M-P's toll-free number. If the vote was emailed, it was not considered valid until confirmed by a return phone call (almost always via international long-distance) from the Secretary of State made on his tight schedule, and at his own expense.

How did Ben react to being sacked? M-P's actions prodded Ben to a lot of irrational anger, all (to my eyes) obviously designed to intimidate.

The reason for that was pretty obvious to me: an independent vote-collecting effort was liable to expose some pocket voters for the disinterested shams of citizens they were.

I had sat on the sidelines for some time listening to Ben abuse M-P, wondering when M-P would think of this very logical step.

In my opinion, the real turning point wasn't anything Chris or Ben said or did. The wound that gave the Kingdom inoperable peritonitis was when M-P began to crack the foundation of Ben's pocket votes. Even if they weren't all pocket votes, he certainly got enough bizarre reactions to prove that nearly none of those people gave a flying fuck about Talossa.

-JKK, from his proofreading notes

Here are SoS Furxhéir's rules for the 33rd Cosâ Election of the Kingdom of Talossa:

After talking with the prime-minister and party leaders, I have come up with the following rules for the elections

- Voting will be done only using the following matters :

- 1) via the online voting form with a previously issued password. (Marc Moisan just became a citizen, he can e-mail me the password he wants and I will put it in).
- 2) via phone with me, at 1-877-990-7760 (or 001-514-990-7760).

If you get the answering machine, leave your citizen number, name, phone number, vote, province and (optionally) referendum votes. Also leave me your Time zone and the periods I can call you.

I will call back to confirm the vote. The date of the message is the date you voted, but I need to be able to confirm your vote within 7 days of the end of the election. If I unable to reach you within 7 days of the end of the election, your vote is not official.

3) You can send an email to sos[at]Talossa.net, but like a phone message, I will need to confirm your vote by calling you within 7 days of the end of the election.

- Proxy voting is NOT allowed.

- Parties who register will need to each pay the ammount of 5\$ US to help me pay the long distance fees (both incoming and outgoing) as allowed in the organic law. I will provide payment instructions at a later stage. Paypal is preferred, but I will accept other methods.

- I remove Ben Madison as Deputy SoS, and will not hire a Deputy SoS. This means every vote must go thru me personally. Should I become incapable of performing my duties, I have already contacted someone to be my Deputy and will announce it in time.

- The current population census is now official.

- Every single electoral system in the world provide a deadline to register for the election. Everyone CURRENTLY a citizen will be allowed to vote (include Marc Moisan). Anyone gaining or regaining citizenship after this post will not be registered for the election.

- Referendums will be lister later on.

- The election process is not officially begun. Parties can register.

Wittmeister
Secretary of State
Senator of Atatürk
Cosâ Member
Resident Miracle Worker
All around nice guy ;-)

Rules for the Election (Witt X 10906)

posted by [MPF] on May 01, 2004 - 04:41.

There are 2 parts in an election :

- 1) The voter harvesting
- 2) The voting process.

The first one is usually done by parties contacting their own voters, but ever since I became the SoS, I started calling citizen such as Martin Bertagnon whom nobody wants to call.

A call to his country is 3\$ per minutes. Last time I reached him, the phone call lasted 21 minutes (this costing me 63\$) as I explained to him the differences between all the parties. He ended up voting for the PC, not because I was a PC member, but because he CHOSE it.

Last election, I tried calling him, and I missed him.

But in any case, it is NOT the SoS duty to harvest the votes, and the rules of the election do not concern the harvesting.

If Ben calls a citizen to get him to vote, I see no problem at all !!! This is the tradition in Talossa.

It is only the actual voting process that has changed.

In the past, the harvester will have called the person, and if they got the vote by phone, it was 100% legal, even if the person changed his mind after reviewing the facts.

The issue of Pocket votes is partly that many people are not even sure that Ben is REALLY reaching these people (or other citizens).

With me talking to every voter in a non-partisan way, I will be able to attest EVERY vote in the election, which will end the rumors of wrong doing by Ben.

And if Jean Willams actually contacts me to have me call her back, it will be my pleasure to talk to her and get her vote.

I complain about her because she doesn't want to vote thru me, and forbade me to call her.

If she takes the courage to dial my number, I WILL call her back.

But it has NEVER been the duty to make sure every citizen KNEW of the election, only that should they wish to vote, they have to have the opportunity to do so.

With my toll free number and e-mail, I feel it is giving everyone a good chance.

The vote by e-mail doesn't change anything : to vote by mail, they need to KNOW about the election.

And I never said I wouldn't send a message to all voters by mail : it is not yet the time to talk about this. I simply posted the rules for receiving the vote, for not gathering them.

Wittmeister
Secretary of State
Senator of Atatürk
Cosâ Member
Resident Miracle Worker
All around nice guy ;-)

Partial response to Quedéir and his misconceptions (Witt X 11056)
posted by [MPF] on May 03, 2004 - 19:59

Rules for voting by mail :

To vote by mail, you must send a letter written entirely by hand, I will not accept printed or typed ballot since they are too easy to forge.

It must state your identity, and your vote for the general election as well as your vote for the referendum (facultative).

The party and name must be clear and legible.

For the ballot to be valid, you need to include :

- 1) your name and citizen number
- 2) your province
- 3) your general election vote
- 4) your phone number with country code if outside North America
- 5) your mailing address.
- 6) your signature.

I will call every voter to confirm the vote, just like if you voted by e-mail, I need to be able to confirm it before 7 days before the end of the election.

Also, please note that the ballot CAN be scanned and published on the Internet, with your address and phone number marked out.

A vote by mail is not valid until confirmed by phone by me.

ALL VOTES NEED TO BE CONFIRMED BY PHONE UNLESS THE USER VOTES USING THE VOTING FORM.

Finally, the envelope MUST BE POSTMARKED between May 15th and June 14th.

Ballot that come after the end of the election will not be accepted, as it always been the case.

It is my belief that the procedure is easy to follow, and totally safe.

Here is a suggestion on what to write :

Dear Secretary of State,

I [Place name here] citizen number [please number here] of province [place province here] hereby vote for the [insert vote here] party in the general election.

I also vote [place referendum votes here] on the referendums.

[Signature]
[Address]

You can call me to confirm my vote at : [Phone numbers] during [insert hours I should call].

If it is different, it will be accepted, provided all the information is included.

The address is :

2595 Des Vignes
Terrebonne
Québec, Canada
J6Y 1X6

Wittmeister
Secretary of State
Senator of Atatürk
Resident Miracle Worker
All around nice guy ;-)

Rules for voting by mail (Witt X 11347)
posted by [MPF] on May 11, 2004 - 17:13

[Ben:] > > > According to the Database, there is supposed to be a senate race in
> > > Vuode this month. Amy and I were not, of course, notified.

>
[M-P:] > > you are right.
>

[Ben:] > I usually am. I assume the PC had a "secret" candidate lined up in case Amy forgot to run for re-election on
> account of not being notified, like Matthias Muth?

Had there been an election started, it would have been posted on Wittenberg, like EVERY other Senate election.

Just because you are paranoid enough to think that I am corrupted doesn't mean I am.

> > > We would like to cast our votes to re-elect Amy Durnford, if votes against your party are still allowed under your
> > > rules.

>
> > Will you stop telling everyone that I am corrupted ???
>

> As soon as you stop acting like a PC Party officer and start acting like a neutral, nonpartisan Secretary of State.

As much as you would dream that I am partisan, I am not.

I have never acted in a partisan matter as SoS and never will.

Countless persons, [Quedier], Marc Moisan, Tomás, the Whole PC, Ron Rosalez, Grubi, and every other person I spoke to re-affirmed that my partisanship is a figment of your imagination.

> Firing me as Deputy SoS, purely out of spite and in order to completely monopolize the election procedure in your own hands,

Here is the list of party leaders that asked me to fire you :

- Quedéir Castighâ
- Andy Lowey
- Chris Gruber
- the Whole PC.

You didn't have the support of ANY of the party leaders.

NONE OF THEM Ben.

Stop trying to pretend that I did it in a partisan way.

They ALL explained that they wanted ME alone as SoS rather than have you as Deputy SoS.

[Quedier] later seems to have retracted his commitment on some of my rules, but I do not believe he went against that one.

YOUR FIRING WAS DONE BECAUSE THE PARTY LEADER BELIEVE YOU ARE CORRUPTED IN YOUR ACTIONS AS DEPUTY SOS AND DO NOT TRUST YOU.

I simply echoed THEIR wishes. Deal with it.

> is the cherry on top of a whole sundae of corrupt acts that you've committed since Seatgate.

Let's talk about the Seatgate.

I spoke to Ken Oplinger. He confirms that my actions were legal, that they were a result of HIS request as legal owner of the seats, and not partisan.

He would have to recuse himself from such a trial, but you are welcomed to sue me for a trial in front of JJ. He will be impartial.

> You don't even care about your reputation, all you care about is raw power,

That is a big lie. I don't care about power at all. In Talossa, only YOU care about it.

Our PM candidate is [Quedier] in case you didn't notice. I don't have a problem with [Quedier] as PM, I have a problem with YOU.

> because you know that you can "pull the plug" on Talossa with the flip of a switch.

Funny, even you said that Talossa isn't online. But when you prefer to play the victim you change the roles around.

> You control everybody's access to Wittenberg,

That part is true. But I will NEVER censor wittenberg, otherwise, what would prevent you from opening your own Wittenberg should I act in a partisan matter ?

Just because you try to show that I am corrupt doesn't mean I am.

I have NEVER removed Witt access from a citizen, and never will unless citizen didn't respect the rules (for example, posted porn pictures on Witt repeatly).

> you control
> the election results,

No I don't. The whole process is supervised by the Cort, by the PM, by the party leaders, by the citizens and will be done in a transparent matter.

If a citizens feels violated, he WILL inform everyone on witt or the leader of the party he is voting for.

Or they will inform YOU, and I have every confidence that you will be on my toes every step of the way.

You won't have the pleasure of catching me doing something improper voluntarily, and I know that if I make a mistake, you will be on my back (so I will promptly repair it).

> you control the Clark, you control the websites.

Yeah, what is your point ?? Make you own websites !

Talossa isn't online, you said so very often.

> You can cancel my Witt password at any moment and announce to the world
> that I have "quit" Talossa, and there is nothing and nobody to stop you.

Funny, you keep saying that Talossa isn't online.

I am 100% sure that if I did that, you would call [Quedier], or e-mail him and have the truth restored.

I would do this ONCE, and I would be kicked out for Treason.

> I'm sure that's what you'll do when it comes time to set up your fake "Republic."

Ben, deal with it. The Republic is an abandoned idea that was presented ONLY when 2 of our citizen resigned, and a few others wanted to resign also.

JP's idea was to let the Republic survive the murder of the Kingdom by you.

Even though in desperation I talked about it in one Witt post(which I regret deeply) I never was in favor of the idea, other than on black Tuesday when I was panicking.

Do you ever panic Ben ? It what happens sometimes when you CARE about others and something bad happens to them.

> > Several citizens have e-mailed me saying they are outraged at what you
> > have told them about me. They were too polite to tell you, but they
> think
> > you acted like a jerk.
>
> And several citizens have e-mailed me saying they are outraged at what
> you are doing as Secretary of State,

And you know what ??? Some of the citizens that e-mailed you also e-mailed me to know why I acted like I did, saying they were outraged.

When I explained my actions, they thought you acted like a jerk for explaining them to me.

> but they are too scared to tell
> you, afraid that you will kick them out of Talossa or shut down
> Wittenberg.

How can I kick someone out of Talossa Ben ??? Tell me how ???

And if I do shut down Witt, someone else will start it anew.

I do not have the power you claim I have.

> > You are a stupid fucking asshole.

>

> No, I am a loyal Talossan trying to make sure that you remain a public
> servant and not Dictator for Life.

Funny, Dictator for Life is EXACTLY how many people are calling you.

Quedéir has PLENTY of chances to fire me. I asked him SEVERAL times if I had his supports, saying I would resign then if I didn't, and he said he had FULL confidence in my honesty and professionalism.

Only you think and those that only you talk to think I am corrupted.

Wittmeister

Secretary of State

Senator of Atatürk

Resident Miracle Worker

All around nice guy ;-)

My reply to Ben... (Witt X 11302)

posted by [MPF] on May 11, 2004 - 11:24

Electiongate ultimately did not help things except to assure the fairness of the election to come. But it also sowed more controversy, and was met with derision from various quarters including the Royals and Chên Velméir, who would boycott the election rules by way of a “sit-in”: voting by way of Wittenberg instead of by the SoS’ prescribed methods.

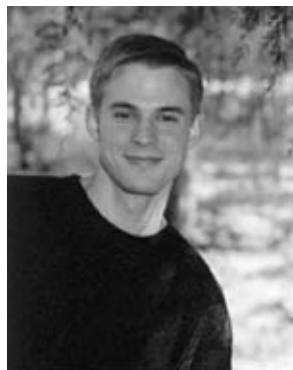
But I digress.

A view from Abbavilla on 14 April 2004

Anger... Suspicion... And an all-encompassing cloud of depression... Such was what the average Talossan citizen was in the midst of on 14 April 2004 - up to his ears. No one was talking about the glelp. No one was caring about the mystical Berber heritage. Even Stotanneu was not publishing. Oraclâ magazine was, but its valiant attempts at injecting a little cheer into the nationette failed.

Anyone who sided with Chris Gruber in any fashion, even if said person condemned Chris’s vicious verbal antics, was considered by the Royals as being a lesser being than an insect. To this day, there is no record of Ben ever attempting to make amends with anyone involved. All apologies, reconciliation attempts, and so forth came only from the PC and the Grey Congress. And to its eternal credit, even the Black Hand Party, from which the King resigned in his 26 December Speech from the Throne, tried to make peace and reconciliation partly in the guise of

The Table of Abbavilla



The Table was an email discussion list mandated in a Speech to the Nation (Witt X 10260) on 14 April 2004 by Prime Minister Quedéir Castiglâ. It eventually included himself, Ben, Chris, Gödafriëu, Michael Pope, Gary Cone, and Marti-Páir Furxhéir. Ián Metáiriâ was to participate in an advisory role. The Table was meant to bring the key players together and forge a bone fide peace.

As a precursor to discussions, Q (pictured at left in about late 2002) asked each Member to submit his comments and thoughts about the cause of the situation, and what each hoped the discussion might achieve. Q would then use all of these to fashion an agenda, from which he would moderate the talks. Gödafriëu Válcadác’h (see Oraclâ No. 50) and Marti-Páir Furxhéir quickly submitted their statements, but the rest did not. It is highly likely that the rest of the group was waiting on what Ben would do.

They, the rest of us, and indeed, the world are still waiting. Ben did nothing. He submitted nothing. He had already given his spin on the Halloween Crisis in the January 2004 Stotanneu (Lytheria Vol. III, Book 1), and that was apparently that. He showed no interest. Because of this, the Table of Abbavilla never got off the ground. On 12 May, by way of Witt X 11417, the Prime Minister officially scrapped it:

Here are my thoughts concerning scattered Witt posts and emails:

M-P and Ben: Your issues are not my problem. Ben, I’ll sack M-P when he pisses me off or does something illegal. He hasn’t done either yet. M-P, if you’re tired of Ben doing or saying things, YOU do something about it. I’m going to need concrete proof (yes, that includes names if need be) from both of you regarding your allegations before I step in again.

MN party leadership: While Wes is the titular head of the party, I am the de facto leader. Think of me as the MN Shogun. *I* make the executive decisions.

M-P’s statement to the Table: I told you I looked it over. What do you want, a critical essay review? What I didn’t say about it is just as important as what I did say. If I had any issues with it, you’d know.

The Table: it isn’t working. I wrongly assumed that everyone would take it seriously. Instead, people are still taking potshots on Witt. So I’m officially putting an end to it. I’ve too slowly come to the realization that rehashing everything isn’t going to work at all. No surprise, since it isn’t even what I wanted to do in the first place, yet I at least had to try something at the time.

Some thoughts (Witt X 11417)

posted by **[Quedéir Castiglâ]** on May 12, 2004 - 13:08

The fact that we seceded from the Kingdom on Quedéir Castiglâ’s watch still pains us. Quedéir is a loyal Talossan in the best sense of the word. He loves his nation; he showed that love with his efforts to keep it together. I’ve never heard anyone question his integrity, kindness, candor, or statesmanship. The task of bringing things back together again was beyond anyone. Not even a Prime Minister Dan Lorentz or Ián Metáiriâ could have pulled it off.



*The city of Abbavilla, capital of the Kingdom of Talossa, Atatiürk province, ca. 2000
Also known as the campus of the University of Milwaukee, Wisconsin*



Archived from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee website, this is the entrance to Garland and Pearce Halls occupied partly by the Department of Psychology in which Harry L. Madison taught for forty years.

Lisagate

We had no more options. Ben still had a large base of support among inactive Talossans—who innocently (and conveniently) still trusted Ben to the point of being beyond anyone else’s influence--but his credibility with the rest of us was shot. Nothing in our power could give us enough votes to act against Ben, his bloc of silent ‘pocket votes,’ and the no-votes we felt would surely come from those in the “neutral” faction (Dan Lorentz, Gary Cone, etc.). Since January, we had talked increasingly of starting our own nationette. Had not Coop and Art’s renunciations pushed us over the edge already, this might very well have:

I renounce my citizenship, and request that the SOS make it effective immediately upon his reading of this message. I HAVE JUST VOTED CONTRA ON ALL REFERENDA, AND I VOTED FOR NO PARTY, AND ULTIMATELY I WOULD VOTE AGAINST TALOSSA IF I COULD. I DO NOT WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS HELL-HOLE AND THE MANY FUCKED-UP INDIVIDUALS IT SEEMS TO HARBOR. Only a handful of you seem to be decent human beings, and I wish those few the best if they decide to stick around. The rest are like a pack of rabid dogs, out for the kill. All of this crap has finally driven Chris over the edge, which I'm sure will make quite a few of you very happy. Moments ago he got very upset, he became mad at me for not defending him, and he took off (in the car) in a rage. There's no telling what he's going to do or what may happen to him. I, in the meantime, am trying to type this while sobbing uncontrollably. I guess this is just one big fucking war game to many of you (Ben and his disciples), so it doesn't matter the effect you're having on real peoples lives. I don't have the time or emotional energy to have to be continually defending Chris from so many vile and ridiculous attacks, which he takes very personally and rightly so. We have a lot of very serious real life problems to deal with right now, and we really don't need shit from the land of make believe being flung at us too. But Ben has to keep digging things up (literally and figuratively) because he's a spoiled man-child that can't let go until he gets what he wants. I see now, that he won't back down no matter what and that he will dump long time friends if they will not give him his way. Those of you who are condoning such behavior should be extremely ashamed of yourselves - at the very least! Thank God, Chris has returned and he is unharmed, physically anyway. Emotionally, however, he's really been through the ringer thanks to many of you. You all know who you are, and to those of you I bid you a not so fond go to hell.

Lisa Skovalia

I'M OUT OF HERE! FUCK ALL OF YOU ASSHOLES! (Witt X 11892),
posted by **Lisa Skovalia** on May 17, 2004 - 23:44

Lisa, I am pained to read your message. Talossa will be a little less friendly without you.

I hope you will reconsider, but I understand if you don't.

Michael Pope
Minister of Foreign Affairs
National Archivist
President, Progressive Conservative Party
Publisher, Talossan National News
Hipster Doofus
Humblest Man on Earth

"This is not a rental car. This is privately owned!"

Oy. (Witt X 11929)
posted by **Michael Pope** on May 18, 2004 - 11:28

Lisa cast her vote for the “None” party because she didn’t realize she had the legal right under the Organic Law to abstain. She wished to give voice to her dissent, and this she did:

Party	Atatürk		Cézembre		Florençiä		Maricopa		Maritiimi-Maxhestic		Mussolini		Vuode		Total	
GCP									1	10.26					1	10.26
MN	1	21.15					1	13.46					5	42.31	7	76.92
none									1	10.26					1	10.26
PC	1	21.15	1	11.54			1	13.46	1	10.26					4	56.41
Total	2	42.31	1	11.54	0	30.77	2	26.92	3	30.77	0	15.38	5	42.31	13	152+48

33rd Cosä Election result as of Wednesday, 19 May, 2004; 13:18 CDT (Oraclä No. 54)
This table was copied and pasted directly from the Talossa Database System and shows confirmed votes only.
This table was archived from http://talossa.net/election_result.php near
to the time that it first appeared in the state in which you now see it.
*The record of Lisa’s vote is in **bold-red**.*

When I read Lisa’s post, I phoned the Gruber residence immediately. Lisa was crying her eyes out. I was scared for both of them. As his past and everything else I have mentioned and discussed show, everyone knew that Chris was not going to do anything violent. We were worried and sad about her renunciation, which she soon retracted.

It was a raw and painful time, a time for a monarch to console and comfort his subjects:

We, the champions of nothing, in the spirit of Josh Macht, hereby declare the existence of the NONE PARTY, which has already received a vote in Maritiimi-Maxhestic Province. Glory to the supporters of NONE!

Our leader: Ben Madison.

Our 50-word statement: "NONE!"

This registration has been made with the Secretary of State.

Ahem. The reason I'm doing this, is so nobody else can do it. The precedent of the Mickey Mouse Movement indicates that such 'protest votes' like this may, depending on decisions of the Cort and Secretary of State, turn into actual seats.

Therefore, to forestall anybody else from claiming those seats, I am hereby officially doing so.

Ben

*This is Talossa, not Florida: COUNT EVERY VOTE!

REGISTRATION OF THE NONE PARTY! (Witt X 11891)
 posted by **[R. Ben Madison]** on May 17, 2004 - 23:39.

Sadly, the post title says it all...

Michael Pope
 Minister of Foreign Affairs
 National Archivist
 President, Progressive Conservative Party
 Publisher, Talossan National News
 Hipster Doofus
 Humblest Man on Earth

"This is not a rental car. This is privately owned!"

What a craven opportunist. (Witt X 11927)
 posted by **Michael Pope** on May 18, 2004 - 11:15.

oh Ben, my Ben, whatever happened to you?

You used to have style and presence, and a "classy" way about you. When I met you, you were a true personification of what Talossa was. You were kind and hospitable. You were a reasonable human being, and worthy of friendship. Now, it has all changed-- you have become unroyal, ugly, nasty, and mean. Is that your real intent? To be a megalomaniac despot? Seriously, kiddo, not trying to be unpleasant to you. You seem to be spiralling into a very bad and uncomfortable place. This worries me. It worries me not so much about Talossa, but you, and Amy.

I have made ugly and unkind statements to you and about you, to be sure. I never dreamed that you would take them more personally than I did about those you'd made to and about me. It ain't personal to me, Ben, any of this shit. I still think Talossa needs its King. I'm just beginning to wonder if you're the guy for the job. No offense intended.

I'd like to remain a Talossan citizen, at least, but if you can't even see why people are unhappy with you, then I don't know what to do. It's obviously stupid to try to reason with you from my now (intentionally) powerless position, but let me at least give it one shot.

You need a break, friend, and I'm glad you're taking one soon. I hope that you have a very good trip, and that you and Amy find fuels for your marriage therein. I'd like to see you be happy again. It seems like you're just doing the fault-finding thing over and over with all your subjects, even the ones who would have supported you if you hadn't attacked them.

I could analyze this crap for months (and , for all we know, there might be an anthropology student out there who is doing just that-- they're quite hot on the "Everquest" and such nowadays). But I won't. Hurray, eh?

However all this shit turns out, Ben, I'm grateful for the friendliness you showed me last July. I have not forgotten it, and won't. I'm deeply sorry that your anger with Chris, and his with you, are tearing the nation apart. If only you were reasonable, kind, and friendly person now that you seemed to me then.....

That you have difficulties with Ián Metáiriá now is a symptom of whatever the hell is going on with you. I urge you to make it up somehow. Jesus Fucking Christ, Ben, you've known this guy forever. Without friendships, what is Talossa?

I'm willing to bend. I'm willing to be flexible. I'm willing to try to find a way to fit in. Talossa is still important to me. For me, anymore, there ARE NO SIDES TO TAKE. All I care about is the longevity of the nation. Which is why I quit as IM. Mark can do a better job than me, I'm sure, since I am completely without time as of late.

Yours sincerely,

Andy

RE: REGISTRATION OF THE NONE PARTY! (Witt X 11905)

posted by **Andy** on May 18, 2004 - 00:37.

Eventually, of course, Andy did take sides.



Dan Lorentz, ca. 1996

If Andy--one of the best Talossan bureaucrats who ever served me and one whose Wittenberg posts I usually enjoyed reading, is resigning because he thinks what you're doing is over-the-line, that's troubling to me. Talossa badly needs people like him--people who do important Talossan jobs quickly and well and who maintain a sense of humor about Talossan politics--to stay in office.

Ben, I'm worried.

Dan Lorentz

Ben: This is not good (Witt X 11954)

posted by [Dan Lorentz] on May 18, 2004 - 21:27.

I'm sorry to see you have to resign. You kept the Immigration Ministry going like clockwork and have caused me to calm down a bit too.

And yes, I, too will never forget just how cool Ben was with me in the two trips I have made to Talossa.

Gödafríeu R.
Senator, MA

Andy, you were a great IM! (Witt X 11906)

posted by Gödafríeu Válcadác'h on May 18, 2004 - 00:41.

> I'm sorry to see you have to resign. You kept the Immigration Ministry going like clockwork and have caused me to calm down a bit too.

Thanks for the kind words, Gödafríeu. I'm sorry about it too.

>

> And yes, I, too will never forget just how cool Ben was with me in the two trips I have made to Talossa.

Ah, dang, and that's the whole problem for me-- Ben used to be a really great guy to be around. Now, I don't know what to think anymore.

Too personal? Maybe so. But it's time we all realized that Talossa is based, primarily, on friendly interaction. Used to be that even heated debates didn't overcome our innate friendships. Now, though, it's different. Ain't all Ben's fault. I gotta take a few lashes of the guilt-whip myself. I'm *this* close to being done with it, but I can't let YOU down, or [IÁN M.], or Chris, or Ben, or [Quedier], or anyone else-- seee? It's like a family. I owe you guys, all of you who have ever helped me or interacted with me, a great debt. I am grateful for your companionship.

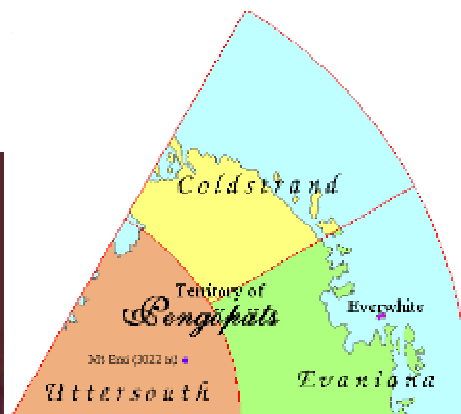
Yerz,

Andy

RE: Andy, you were a great IM! (Witt X 11909)

posted by Andy on May 18, 2004 - 00:57.

What could we do? Clearly, Ben Madison was no longer fit and morally-justified to rule. Most of us felt he was no longer even fit to be a Talossan citizen. Thanks to his voting bloc, Ben would get away scot-free. No retribution for Halloween, “Be proud of that, it’s all you have,” Lisagate, or anything else. At this writing he still has taken no punishment from the Kingdom of Talossa.



*from l-r: the logo of the third Liberal Party of the Kingdom of Talossa; Phil Ledgerwood (from www.philledgerwood.com),
and a map of the Territory of Pengopäts taken from the www.talossa.com archives at www.waybackmachine.org*

For us, there was but one choice left. The Liberals made it. Phil Ledgerwood made it. The group that eventually became former Penguineans made it.

In our case, it would be more of a ‘nuclear option.’

A Nation Sundered

Part Four: Exodus

by

Gödafrieu Válcadác'h

*Signatory of the Compact of 19 May, 2004 and a Founding Father of the Republic of Talossa
Twenty-sixth and Twenty-ninth Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Talossa*



The flag of the Republic of Talossa



Maritiimi province as seen from the Talossan Sea, ca. 2003



Mikey Gruber in the autumn or thereabouts of 2002 at approximately five years of age

At last

On Wednesday, 19 May, 2004, Michael Pope presented the Progressive Conservative caucus, Chris Gruber, and Lisa Skovalia with a document he had written on a lark that morning: the Compact. It was meant to be the codification of everything we had been talking about doing recently. It was also Michael's way of bringing organization and purpose to our debate. The Compact dealt with secession; the idea wasn't new, but the audience was now much more receptive. Our consensus was that we wanted to chuck King Robert I and the Monarchy, but we still loved the idea of the Talossan nationette, *el glhep Talossán*, and maintaining friendships with everyone else in Talossa. Ben's tyrannical behavior, and our anger at it did not detract from our desire to remain *Talossan*. We felt that Ben Madison had forfeited his right to be a leader of Talossans. He was no king of ours anymore.

Did we have a legitimate claim on Talossan history, culture, and institutions? The first major Talossan mass departure had been that of Penguinia in late 1997. Miestrâ Schivâ, a former Penguinian, recalls she and her fellow Penguinians didn't feel that their short Talossan tenure gave them a valid claim on anything at all Talossan; hence, their failed attempt at their own language and culture. Our case was rather different. On 19 May 2004, only two of us soon-to-be Founding Parents had been Kingdom citizens for less than three years (Andy Lowry and Lisa Skovalia). Most of us had put incredible amounts of time and energy into Talossan activities, including serving in many leadership positions including, in the case of Chris Gruber, Michael Pope, and Gödafrieu Válcadác'h, continuous service as Prime Minister of more than five years. My estimation is that, among us eleven Founding Parents, we had about thirty years of collective Talossan experience, outdistancing even the experience of Ben Madison and the actual age of the Kingdom! We believed we had a valid claim to Talossan cultural legacies and institutions, so long as we gave due credit to Ben Madison. In particular, he deserved (and deserves still, of course) credit for the invention and primary cultivation of the *glhep*. We wanted to keep what was good and chuck what was bad.

We elected to secede, and call our new nationette The Republic of Talossa.

This decision answered one question and spawned a dozen. Which provinces and territories should we claim? Vuode, Ben's own stomping grounds and the location of the smelly Vuode Beach (near a wastewater treatment plant or somesuch), was out of the question. We nixed Mussolini, even with Muth's 99-year lease on leadership, as strong "Benite" country. Atatürk was unrealistic because it contained the city of Abbavilla (aka the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee), it being the national capital and about as Kingdom-esque as a place could be outside of Vuode. It was also a hotbed of pro-Ben/neutrality sentiment. In the end, we chose the provinces where we either had a majority of the citizenry (as in Maritiimi-Maxhestic), had people in provincial leadership or representation, or both. We ended up with Maritiimi-Maxhestic, Maricopa and Florenciâ. Just because we liked the place—and with an eye toward the return of Ián Anglatzarâ and other Europeans—we made Cézembre the fourth.

In the Compact, we agreed to renounce our citizenships in the Kingdom and form the new country. In so doing, we committed High Treason against the Kingdom. We decided to declare Independence on 1 June 2004. We ratified a Provisional Constitution on May 31, 2004, and decided that a Proclamation of Independence would be the method by which would promulgate the Provisional Constitution and our renunciations. At the same time the Provisional Constitution was ratified, Michael Pope was elected as the first Dean of the Provisional Governing Council and our first Head of State.

On Wednesday, 1 June 2004 at exactly Noon TST, we waded ashore on the far bank of our Rubicon.

The Republic of Talossa was born.

Proclamation of Independence

posted by The Republic of Talossa on June 01, 2004 - 13:00

User Info

The Republic of Talossa



The new Proclamation of *Independence* for *Talossa*

In *Unity*, hereby dedicated and signed 1 June 2004

The unanimous Declaration of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Talossa,

Whereas in the history of the sovereign nationette of Talossa we have long endured the foibles of our royal family, from quirky ancient histories to multiple miniature “revolutions”, through Gloria Estefan revivals and street-naming, one thing has gone long untouched, unseen, unspoken: the king is incapable of allowing true alternate opinions from forming and taking shape within Talossa’s borders, both physical and electronic. It is the right of Talossans everywhere to keep and preserve their peace, their liberty, their freedom, and, as such, we Talossans hereby stand together as one, united in our assertion that Talossa is a great community, much greater than the sum of its parts; a community wrought not by one man, but by all Talossans everywhere, throughout her history; a community that will survive on the blood, sweat, and tears of her people for-ever.

When we cast a glance upon our beloved nationette, where fair freedom we have long enjoyed, sorrow fills our hearts to behold her struggling under the heavy load of oppression and tyranny. But when we extend our sight a little farther, and view the iron hand that is lifted against us, behold it is our king; he who, by his oath and station, is bound to support and defend us in the quiet enjoyment of all our glorious rights as free Talossans. We Talossans hereby declare that we are a free people and a free community and, above all, a free nation dedicated to Talossan ideals through actual freedom, not a form of bound and restricted freedom maintained by a tyrant. We cry ‘Tyrant!’, for the king has acted most unjust in his own manner, seeking to harm those with whom he is in disagreement.

In the pursuit of a singular agenda to drive out all who oppose him in any strong fashion, the king has, especially recently, decided to circumvent every law and tradition Talossa has ever had concerning the safety and welfare of Talossan citizens.

A few years ago, the question of independence from the monarchy would have put us into a surprise, and, we apprehend, would have been treated with the utmost contempt. We then looked on ourselves happy in being subjects of the king of Talossa. We have always looked upon it as our duty, as well as our interest to defend and support the honour of the crown of Talossa, and we have always done it, counting ourselves happy when in the strictest union and connection with our monarchy. However, in all provinces, existing by compact, protection and allegiance are reciprocal; the latter being only due in consequence of the former. The history of the present king of Talossa is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these provinces. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

Whereas, Robert Rouergue, king of Talossa, in violation of the principles of the Talossan organic law, and of the laws of justice and humanity, has, by an accumulation of oppression unparalleled in our history, excluded the inhabitants of Wittenberg from his protection;

- He has investigated the pasts of various individuals, both citizen and prospective;
- He has accused citizens not only of committing crimes in Talossa, but of committing crimes outside Talossa, including violent crimes and he has offered no evidence to prove such crimes, but seeks to tarnish any reputation each Talossan has earned on their own;
- He has sought to drive citizens out of Talossa;
- He has sought the passage of bills of attainder, specifically targeting Talossans;
- He has instilled a horrid sense of suspicion amongst the Talossan citizens;
- He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good;
- He has conspired to work against other parties while laying accusations of conspiracy against these parties;
- He has refused to appoint a prime minister until installing his own long after the prescribed legal deadline and he has refused to follow the law of the land by announcing the continuation of the incumbent;
- He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his appointment of valid justices;
- He has sought a means by which he may circumvent the proper election laws;
- He has cast aspersions at the characters of democratically elected leaders;
- He has inexorably determined upon the ruin of our liberties;
- He has conspired to oust legitimately placed officials of state;
- He has acted in a manner of inconsistency, claiming illegality of actions he has previously supported;
- He has been complicit in sedition, and did overthrow a legitimate government;
- He has rescinded on promises of appointment to position for citizens;
- He has sought to remove the citizenship of Talossans through every means, including those means extra-Talossan;
- He has committed to the fraud of an electorate by casting illegal votes in the name of others;
- He has sought to harm the binds of friendship between Talossans by scheming to create allegiance to him and his station against all others;
- He has offered only puppets of state in the stead of popularly elected officials;
- He has accused many Talossans of crimes of treason, declaring that we are not Talossan, but traitorous;
- He has made himself unavailable to the officers and affairs of state;
- He has sought to re-write Talossan history by laying claims of illegality and impropriety where none existed;
- He has vowed never to offer reconciliation or to assent to such reconciliations;
- He has threatened the welfare of Talossan citizens, upon the arrival of certain citizens to these shores;
- He has exacerbated our calamities, by declaring that he will show us no mercy until he has reduced us;

A monarch whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. We have sought to end all hostility through civil and determined means, through legal redress, and through simple dialogue, and all avenues before us have been trampled thin with the hostility that has been shown by the crown. He has blatantly refused to co-operate with any Talossan who does not support his agenda of hatred.

As a result of the actions of the king, we are obliged, by necessity, and it becomes our highest duty, to use every means, with which we have been furnished, in support of our invaluable rights and privileges; to oppose that power which is exerted only for our destruction.

Be it enacted by the authority of the people that Robert Rouergue is hereby deposed from the kingly office within this government and absolutely divested of all its rights, powers, and prerogatives; and that he and his descendants and all persons claiming by or through him, and all other purposes whatsoever shall be and for-ever remain incapable of the same; and that the said office shall henceforth cease and nevermore either in name or substance be re-established within this Republic.

We the delegates of the people of Talossa do declare that the King of Talossa has violated his inherent compact with this people, and that they owe no more allegiance to him. The measures still pursued against Talossa leave no room to expect such an interposition from motives of goodness and affection. King Robert the First has manifested deliberate enmity towards us and, under the character of a parent, persists in behaving as a tyrant, and so we renounce allegiance not to Talossa but to him, personally, forever.

We declare the right of the people of Talossa to the ownership of Talossa, and to the unfettered control of Talossan destinies, to be sovereign and infeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a corrupt monarchy has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Talossan people. In every generation the Talossan people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Talossan Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

We, therefore, the representatives of the free provinces of Talossa, in general agreement, assembled, appealing to the will of the people for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these provinces, being Maritiimi-Maxhestic, Cézembre, Maricopa, and Florenciâ, solemnly publish and declare, that this free Talossa is and of right ought to be a free and independent state; that it is absolved from all allegiance to the crown, and that all political connection between it and the House of Rouergue, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as a free and independent state, it may establish a free government, devoid of monarchist trappings, devoid of feudal relationships, devoid of tyranny. And for the support of this declaration, we mutually pledge to each other our time, our effort, and our dedication.

Signed by the representatives of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Talossa,

Michael Pope
Christopher C Gruber
Andrew Lowry
Gödafríeu Válcadác'h
Andrea Thompson
Lisa Skovalia
Gregory Tisher
Gjermund Higræff
Jeremiah P Griffin
Ughán Cruceatúl
Matthias Muth

Desfisetæ qualse'cosâ denen. / Aude aliquid dignum.:

Dare something worthy.

A Letter of Explanation

posted by The Republic of Talossa on June 01, 2004 - 13:00

User Info

The Republic of Talossa

(2 posts total) (last post: June 01, 2004 - 13:00)



We, the people of Talossa, have grown weary of what the Kingdom has become recently. We all feel Talossan in our hearts, and love our nationette, but we do NOT love what it has become, and what it promises to continue as, under the rule of King Robert I.

For the past several months, we have been under constant fire for not turning our heads and allowing the King to run roughshod over the rights of our fellow citizens. Since the "Halloween scandal" a persistent stream of vitriolic fire has been aimed at anyone associating at first with the GCP, and then eventually with Chris Gruber. The GCP decision not to back the MN after the last election is what set this fire ablaze. All of this stems from a royal defeat in the political arena.

While Gruber has repeatedly apologized for certain nasty comments he made in the heat of the political battle, and while he stayed silent from January to April, the King has maintained a negative campaign of hate that has simmered since last December. In his desperation to achieve political support for his public shunning, he funded a private investigation of Mr. Gruber's personal life - a shocking violation of the privacy of a fellow citizen, and an unprecedented abuse of royal power. A man's room is *not* his castle, not if he opposes King Robert of Talossa. And the King has promised to use this tactic in future on other opponents.

The King has violated a pledge he made to stay out of partisan politics by campaigning feverishly for the Black Hand Party. His campaign has been one of bald-faced lies as he sought support from less-active citizens whose main source of information on doings in the RT was he himself. We know, for example, that he told Paola Cleri that under the election rules she would have to make a long-distance international call to the Secretary of State - when he knew full well that the rules compelled the Secretary of State to make the call - at his own expense. And while the King conspired to violate his promise and aid one party over another, he made baseless accusations toward the opposition parties of conspiracy and fraud.

The King has made no effort to extend an olive branch to factions other than his own. He has clearly demarcated a line between those who support him (who he calls Loyal Talossans) and those who oppose him politically. This is inconsistent with the democratic principles on which Talossa is founded and in which we all believe. And this is a very bad portent for the future for anyone not currently in the King's good graces.

It is clear that the King will not keep agreements he has made. It is clear that the King will lie when it advances his agenda. And it is clear that for the past half-year that King Robert has done nothing to build this nation, but rather has done everything in his power to drive certain individuals out of Talossa, heedless of the fact that his actions have caused renunciations from devout citizens, destroyed long term friendships which are the core of this country, and infringed on the personal lives of its citizenry in a way that goes far below the lowest common denominator ever imagined.

We are tired of the hate and its source is with one person.

We are tired of King Robert the Worst

We, the concerned people of Talossa, are hereby founding the Republic of Talossa, where we can pursue the vision of a democratic nationette, the vision shared by all Talossans but frustrated by the King. In founding this Republic, we do not want to exclude any of our fellow citizens, with whom we are tied with bonds of shared nationality and honor. We extend an invitation to any current or past Talossans to leave the King and join with your fellow Talossans in the Republic, where we can carry on the great work of nation building without all the hate and vitriol we have been suffering under. This Republic will be a place where our democratic principles will come to fruition, to build a nationette we can *all* be proud of.

We hope you will join us.

Sincerely,

Michael Pope, on behalf of the Republic of Talossa

Göðafriæn's part in this drama

In my Preface, I admitted that playing a key, albeit unwitting, role in all that went on. As Prime Minister, I was a restraining influence. In the fall of 2003, I removed my finger from the dike, and the hitherto unseen and unheeded waters of Temper and Wrath came through. Not even Ben and Chris could see it then—and I certainly couldn't—but this torrent would drown the Kingdom of Talossa in paranoia, vindictiveness, vitriol, poison, and spite.

I've come to understand that Wrath and Temper were always waiting in the wings. Call me egotistical if you will, but I believe that my tenure kept them at bay. Was it admiration for my administration? I'd like to think so; I hope I've laid the facts before you, that you may be the judge. One thing is certain: the trouble began to get serious right about the time my administration became ineffective in September and October 2003. Wrath and Temper embarked on a doomed joint political project, a march through a minefield of potential miscues.

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised some of those mines detonated.



*Outside of Vnode Palace on Sunday evening, 13 July, 2003, though the building behind us is not Vnode Palace
The Zog salute is given by (from left) Göðafriæn Válcadác'b, Tomás Garicéir, Chris Gruber, and Ben Madison
It is the last time, most likely, that Ben Madison and Chris Gruber will ever see each other face-to-face.*

What's the big deal, anyway?

As someone recently put it on Wittenberg, evidence suggests that Ben Madison is a “Jekyll-Hyde” personality. I have met him in-person, and each time, he could not have been more gracious and polite - going out of his way to ensure I had a good time - the perfect host. Only online, without in-person contact, does he seem to get nasty. I’ve never felt that he was not a fundamentally decent man, but such a man can have serious quirks that undermine that decency—if he allows that to occur. If you think to dismiss what Ben did in the spring of 2004, realize that it could have been *you* instead of Chris Gruber.

Our Talossan sandbox is a pretend world. Yes, there is *el glbeþ Talossán* of about forty thousand words (as of this writing), built and crafted mostly by the tremendous linguistic scholarship of R. Ben Madison. That’s part of his legacy; the other, and most important, is the community of real and breathing human beings scattered to the four corners of the globe. He founded this community; he later hammered on it until it broke asunder. There have always been conflicts and disagreements in Talossa over politics (Talossan and extra-Talossan), among other bones of contention, but always before the ‘fighting’ was limited to traditional, benign, and *Talossan* methods: the telephone, the printed word, email, chat clients, and our various Internet discussion forums. There was always that fine line known as *common courtesy*.

Ben didn’t just cross that fine line. He obliterated it.

Common courtesy dictates that I do not look for the marriage records of, say, Andy Lowry. Those are none of my business. Imagine we were in Andy’s home. He invites me into his living room. It’s not untoward for me to look around at whatever stuff he has hanging on the wall, or at his bookshelf. Do I have the right to dig around in his hallway or bedroom closet? Not unless he invites me to do so. Thus it is with Talossa. That which a Talossan makes the business of others, that’s a fair topic for discussion. In Talossa, we *trust* each other to keep out of each other’s private rooms, be they file cabinets, pantries, garden sheds, or wherever. A man’s bedroom is supposed to be his castle.

And this brings up the logical and burning question: *Did Christopher C. Gruber ever truly make bona fide death threats against Ben Madison?* The notion is ludicrous and utterly absurd. Chris chose an elaborate way to say “drop dead.” Millions and millions of speakers of the English language around the world have used that expression without standing accused of threatening harm. At the very worst, it could mean a hope for someone’s demise—not admirable, but not a death threat.

Ben was wrong, so wrong that it made moot every nasty thing Chris Gruber ever said to him.

Dear reader, are you lucky enough to have one person outside your blood relatives who would take you in should you become homeless? I hope you are. For Ben Madison, Art Verbotten was that kind of friend. In a figurative sense, Ben spat in his face. Two decades of friendship, vanished in a sustained storm of Wrath.

However all this shit turns out, Ben, I'm grateful for the friendliness you showed me last July. I have not forgotten it, and won't. I'm deeply sorry that your anger with Chris, and his with you, are tearing the nation apart.

- from **RE: REGISTRATION OF THE NONE PARTY!** (Witt X 11905),
posted by Andy on May 18, 2004 - 00:37.

Does anyone consider you a brother or sister? Ben had *eleven* people (the Founding Parents of this Republic) who once respected, admired, even loved him; some considered him a brother. Though M-P Furxhéir was not a Founding Parent, it’s safe to add him to our list. Ben kicked us all in the teeth, even Andrea Thompson, whose only sin was that she chose to believe us instead of him. For Ben, that was a mortal sin.

Ben had more lights in his life than just those. He once had the friendship of Miestrâ Schivâ and Ián Anglatzarâ, as well as the man formerly known as the “Greek God Guy.” These three are now citizens of the Republic. Among those who have not fully returned from the Talossan Diaspora, but who once called Ben a friend, are Phil Ledgerwood, Jay Shorten, Danihel, T. Carter Ross, Eddie Abel, and Jamila Cruciani.

Talossa is Ben Madison’s baby. He started it. He made it grow. He kept it alive in times when everyone else chilled in the spectre of Apathy. As my father said to me (in a positive light), it takes someone a little odd to have kept something like this going for so long. Little wonder that good people like Gary Cone who have known him for almost two decades

cannot fathom Talossa without Ben. Does Ben have his quirks? Of course, he does. We *all* do. *How we act* on our quirks is the issue.

Can we, then, forgive Ben and Amy? If we can and do, I believe the Republic has no reason to exist. If we can and do, Ben's antics would not be held against him anymore, and would fade into oblivion, especially considering the spin-laden *Ar Päts*. If we don't forgive Ben and Amy, we move ahead. However, before you or I answer that question, we need to consider that what Ben did was so terrible not just because of the line he crossed and the trust he violated, but, most of all, of Chris' son,

Mikey

Chris Gruber has stated publicly, more than once, that his first wife, Mikey's mother, was neither a good wife or a good mother. This is public knowledge, and I have no reason to not believe Chris. Chris has divorced this person, and has sole custody of Mikey, their son. The following Wittenberg VIII post from 2002 (L'Oraclâ #31) gives a full explanation of Gruber's state of mind that provoked him to his vociferous reaction at Advertgate. It explains "F--k America." And the fact that Ben has never taken this into account or realized that the fact Chris having sole custody might be a case for his having never been violent towards anyone is no small part of the absolute stupidity of what went on.

The Great Grubi Personal Issue Gets ALmost 100% Straightened Out

Posted by: Chris Gruber on: 01/10/2003 23:50:37 EST

The Personal Issue referred to in the announcement from our Party recently is the custody of my son, Mikey.

On December 12, Mikey's mother (here on out referred to as E.B.) picked him up from school. Until this afternoon, I hadn't seen or heard from him the whole time between then and now.

She had made herself so scarce: refusing to return pages (the only way to get a hold of her), telling her mother not to answer the phone (and her mother was the only one who knew where E.B. and Mikey were), even after I had called the sheriff's department... The police could not help me because there had been no actual judgement or court order saying who had actual custody.

Five days after she abducted him (the third time in the 20 months we've been separated), she filed for a Motion for Temporary Relief: I was the ATM and Mikey the ATM card. The hearing for that motion was yesterday.

Luckily, last week I acquired a lawyer (a terrific one, BTW) and the Motion for Relief **wasn't even addressed** yesterday morning! The judge told her that she had to return Mikey to me immediately; he specified that she take him to school the morning of the 10th (today) since she had kept him out of school too long and was claiming to home school him (despite the fact that the state of Florida requires a teacher's certification before homeschooling is allowed; she doesn't have one), and I would pick him up after school.

Well, glory be; I did. He's home, safe, and very happy. The arguments in my favour: I have a job and have had the same one since July 2001 (she has never held a job longer than 2 months); I have a car for steady transportation (she walks everywhere); I have a clean criminal record (she's had warrants for her arrest as recently as last month); I live in a solid dwelling and have since April 30, 2001 (she's hopped everywhere from boyfriends' trailers and apts to her grandparent's house to the homeless shelter and hotels, averaging a stay of three weeks); I've got steady health insurance for myself and Mikey (she can only get Medicaid, which don't covah sheeyit).

The topper? I'm 28 and she's (get this) 34, soon to be 35.

My lawyer also asked the judge to appoint a Guardian Ad Litem to the case to investigate on my standing and hers as well, which the judge granted. The G.A.L. will check out my home, workplace, friends, coworkers, and everything they can about me, as well as the same for her. On this issue, she's MEAT.

The judgment yesterday granting me temporary custody, in combination with the inevitable Guardian Ad Litem investigation(s), and her confrontational attitude (she tried to argue with the judge!) will assure a victory that only the POC has seen the likes of.

Or should I say, the PC would be envious of such a landslide that's about to occur. :-)

What this leads me to is that the enormous stress is relieved, since the next time she runs off I CAN call the cops on her and that frees up so much tension, almost all of which can be directly linked to the intensity of my anger that has surfaced occasionally since November. That, in concert with my recent chiropractic appointments, makes me feel so much better.

Mikey's home and I'm elated!

Votetz Grischún!/Vote Grey!

I mention Chris' son for one reason only. Take a look at this Wittenberg post - Oh, and it's also Ben's first public reaction to the Black Tuesday renunciations of Coop and Verbotten:

RE: Typical Gruber lies. (Wittenberg X 11706)
posted by [R.Ben Madison] on May 16, 2004 - 10:38

[RBM] > > Once again, for the record: THIS IS A COMPLETE, OUT-AND-OUT, LIE.

[Gruber:] > Yeah, you would never, ever do anything to investigate someone else's past, would you?

Translation: Looking at a public website and hiring a private investigator are the same thing. Ben looked at a public website, therefore, the PC has the right to tell people he hired a private investigator.

> > the (apparently Gruber-inspired) story that I have been hiring "private investigators" to look into Gruber, all prospective citizens, and, perhaps, everybody else in Talossa as well.

> I didn't come up with the story, nor did it have anything to with me. All I know is what I've been told.

"Told" by whom?

All I can say is this: You and [Furxheir] have falsely accused me of hiring private investigators to look into people's backgrounds. Is someone investigating you? Because somewhere on Wittenberg you say that people (mysterious, unnamed people) are using Talossan stuff to build a case against you over the custody of your son. All I can say is maybe your ex-wife hired a private investigator? Maybe the P.I. found out about Talossa, and read stuff like "Ben, maybe you should do what your mother did all those years ago.... I will cut off your balls, I do not fucking play," and start to think "Gee, is this guy fit to raise a child? What kind of values is he teaching?"

If there is an investigation into you somewhere, I know nothing about it, but I wish it well. And if I'm ever asked to testify against you in court, believe me, I'm on her side.

> And: what say you concerning the renunciations of Bill Cooper and John Eiffler?

What does that have to do with me? If I could "cause" people to renounce their citizenship, I would have "caused" you to do so a long time ago. I hereby "cause" you to renounce your citizenship. Mouahahahaha.

Ben

Gruber responded:

Typical Madison lies. (Witt X 11722)
posted by Chirisch Cavéir on May 16, 2004 - 20:35.

[Ben:] > > > Once again, for the record: THIS IS A COMPLETE, OUT-AND-OUT, LIE.
>

[Gruber:] > > Yeah, you would never, ever do anything to investigate someone else's past, would you?
>

[Ben:] > Translation: Looking at a public website and hiring a private investigator are the same thing. Ben looked at a public website, therefore, the PC has the right to tell people he hired a private investigator.

No, but when you tell people you're doing so and it gets out, you run from what you said.

> > > the (apparently Gruber-inspired) story that I have been hiring "private investigators" to look into Gruber, all prospective citizens, and, perhaps, everybody else in Talossa as well.

>

> > I didn't come up with the story, nor did it have anything to with me. All I know is what I've been told.

>

> "Told" by whom?

Right.

> All I can say is this: You and [Furxheir] have falsely accused me of hiring private investigators to look into people's backgrounds. Is someone investigating you? Because somewhere on Wittenberg you say that people (mysterious, unnamed people) are using Talossan stuff to build a case against you over the custody of your son. All I can say is maybe your ex-wife hired a private investigator? Maybe the P.I. found out about Talossa, and read stuff like "Ben, maybe you should do what your mother did all those years ago.... I will cut off your balls, I do not fucking play," and start to think "Gee, is this guy fit to raise a child? What kind of values is he teaching?"

You really have no idea, do you? It's almost amusing, except for the fact that you're serious in your accusations.

> If there is an investigation into you somewhere, I know nothing about it, but I wish it well. And if I'm ever asked to testify against you in court, believe me, I'm on her side.

Except that she's living at a homeless shelter.

> > And: what say you concerning the renunciations of Bill Cooper and [Art Verbotten]?

>

> What does that have to do with me? If I could "cause" people to renounce their citizenship, I would have "caused" you to do so a long time ago. I hereby "cause" you to renounce your citizenship. Mouahahaha.

Right. You essentially say "Fuck [Verbotten]." Nice.

Know your rights! Don't go to Cort unrepresented! Contact your solicitor!

Chirschtóval Cavéir, Solicitor

One Talossa

Were we right to secede and still call ourselves “Talossans”? Were we justified? To answer that question, one must, I believe ask himself if what Ben did in 2003 and especially in 2004 justified his continuing on as King and even as a Talossan citizen.

Were we right? Yes. But we and those not on our side did one thing terribly wrong: we, and everyone else in Talossa, let so much of this unfold in the impersonal and dehumanizing venues of email and the internet discussion group. A grave mistake I made was not phoning Ben and other people personally and literally hearing their human voices on the phone (and allowing them to hear mine in turn). For me, it was that I did not want to even try and make agreements and deals via verbal methods. For deals and such, doing things in writing is best, and for that, email is ideal. But I could have still put soothing balm on the situation. If I may say so, part of my success as Prime Minister was my phoning many Talossans just to say hello. In October, 2002, I spoke with Josh Macht and John McGarry and had lovely chats with them both. For not doing this in autumn 2003, I am profoundly sorry, but in the end -- and regardless of my use of the phone or the lack of it - - Ben and Amy, for whatever reason, *chose* to make the spurious allegations against Chris Gruber and they *chose* to dredge up his past and put it on display for all the world to see.

To this day, Ben Madison has never admitted any mistakes he has made in this whole thing, and the mis-steps he made are legion. Chris Gruber, on the other hand, did everything he could to make amends, though once an insult is hanging in the air, it's hard to take it back.

What brought a lot of this on? Let's examine Chris Gruber's sense of humor.

Chris is, as we all know, a highly-strung and passionate person. First time I met him, he immediately insulted me-- but I got past that.

- from **What you foo's be doin'?** (Witt X 5882)

posted by **Andy** on November 11, 2003 - 23:17

And it was this sense of humor that the Royals could not fathom. *That* was the clash of personalities at TalossaFest! Here is what Lisa Skovalia had to say, and I agree with her 100%.

With all due respect, I don't think he's the only one.

But I do think we're getting to the heart of the matter here. Apparently, Chris offended you guys at TalossaFest and the psychic wound has been festering ever since. It is extremely unfortunate that Chris does have a way of pissing people off when he truly doesn't mean to. I know, as I been one of those people as have many of my friends. It also unfortunate that it takes people some time to "get" his sense of humor, and sometimes people just don't. The fact is though, that if you really get to know Chris, you'll realize that 95% of the time Chris is just a wise-cracking joker. He's just being silly and there really is no malintent, but it often gets misconstrued because, as I said, people aren't familiar with or can't understand his sense of humor. I honestly believe that's what happened that day with Amy at the house. He was "goofing" in his usual Chris style, but she took him seriously (understandably) because she didn't know him. I just wish you guys would have said something about it at TalossaFest, so there could have been an opportunity to clear the air in person. I think we (Chris and I) both assumed you guys knew he was joking because you didn't act weird or upset about anything after the fact. Now that it's clear that things were not cool afterall, I think this may be the foremost issue that needs to be addressed. Obviously, you and Amy are not obliged to like Chris. But, if you have a problem with something he did, at least let him know so he has a chance to make things right. Believe me, if you don't tell him, he won't know he did something wrong, because he's really not trying to do anything wrong. Then if he doesn't apologize or explain himself, fine...he's being an asshole and I'll be the first to say so!

-from **RE: Imaginary stuff (Witt X 5776)**, posted by **Lisa Skovalia**
on November 09, 2003 - 23:15.

Then, there is Ben's lack of grace: the fact he never gave Chris the benefit of a doubt where the Joint Statement was concerned. Those who don't know Chris' story with Talossa cannot understand just how much that hurt him. During his six months of homelessness, Talossa was Chris' sanity. Talossa gave Chris a sense of identity and community in this world, and for that, Chris loved Ben Madison as family. And when Ben came out accusing Chris of back-stabbing and not cutting Gruber some slack, Chris was naturally hurt.

[Ben:] > If people would keep their word, Talossa would be a much happier place.

Absolutely. But I also think it's important for people (all of us) to be clear in their communications, to get clarification on important issues, and most of all to understand that none of us are exempt from making mistakes and to try to give each of us the opportunity to right our wrongs, whether they be real or perceived. In other words, let's try to give each other the benefit of the doubt before we jump to conclusions.

With best intentions,
Lisa

-from **RE: Imaginary stuff (Witt X 5776)**, posted by **Lisa Skovalia**
on November 09, 2003 - 23:15.

And let's add the growing influence of Ben on Talossan politics by way of EM200 and his Black Hand party.

The esteemed Dan Lorentz and Ben Madison have known each other since they were about fourteen years of age. This pre-dates Ián Metáiriá, Gary Cone, and Art Verbotten's place in Ben's life. On 21 June 2004 and on the Kingdom's Wittenberg discussion forum, created by Kingdom citizen Pete Hottelet in the week following our independence, Lorentz announced the creation of the "One Talossa" political party. The party's Credo deserves a look.

There are now two Talossas.

In the Kingdom lie Talossa's original spark and genius, its deepest roots and its mighty and sustaining trunk of history and experience.

In the Republic flows much of Talossa's creative force and new growth.

Talossa's roots have lost their vitality; Talossa's vitality has severed itself from its roots.

In two, Talossa will die twice.

There is one great and urgent task for the two Talossas: become one again.

As one, Talossa may yet see another 25 years.

The first four sentences are a perfect summation of the magnitude of the breach Talossa finds herself in today. But this I must say, and I do say it: we who are Talossa's vitality severed ourselves from the roots of history and experience because we found out the hard way just how fouled Talossa's roots had become. Many who left before us Founding Parents realized this already: Ián Anglatzarâ, Phil Ledgerwood, Bill Cooper, Art Verbotten, Miestra Schivâ, and so many others.

Will Talossa die twice? The Kingdom has had a modest influx of new citizens thanks to slackened immigration requirements. One of these is Fritz Buchholtz, proprietor of Napoleon's game store in Shorewood (north of Atatürk province and in the Republic's territory of Shorewood Bay). His participation has given the Kingdom a shot in the arm, but this is also a sad time for the Kingdom: Napoleon's is closing and going out of business in spring of 2005 after twenty-six years in business. While people will be able to purchase games and supplies on the Internet and elsewhere, the community that has grown around Napoleon's will never be replaced.

The Republic is also gaining new prospectives and citizens, yet we suffer from the lack of connection with the local friendship network inherent in the crowd in Milwaukee. At this writing, the citizens of the Republic represent much of the cybercit history of the Kingdom. Former Kingdom Prime Ministers Chris Gruber, Michael Pope, and Gödafriêu Válcadác'h whose combined service began in 1998 and had its final ending on 1 January, 2004 are among the citizens of this Republic, as are two former Kingdom Secretaries of State: Ián Anglatzarâ and Marti-Páir Furxhéir. There are people in the Republic whose memories of Talossa go all the way back to 1997. Every citizen of the Republic save one, Art Verbotten, found Talossa on the Internet. And this is a key difference between the Kingdom and the Republic: the Kingdom citizens are more Milwaukee-centric than they have been in years, and the Republic represents much of Cybercit Talossa.

Which begs the question: Do Cybercit Talossa and Milwaukee Talossa need each other? From reading the One Talossa Party Credo, one should think the answer would be a resounding "yes". But in its light, we need to hold our horses for a bit and remember *why* there are two Talossas in the first place. Those are reasons I have spent pages and pages outlining to you, and they can be boiled down to a single sentence: Ben Madison, the Tyrant, made himself unbearable to be around.

When I could no longer say in good conscience to a prospective the Kingdom of Talossa was a worthwhile pursuit, the Talossan life I knew and had was over; it was my turning point, and it took place on Black Tuesday.

Ben and Amy have shown how they treat those who cross them. They may just come looking for dirt on *you*. But, I say this, and I beg all who read to listen and take heed. Simply for the reason that it's the right thing to do, we cannot let Ben and Amy stand in the way of our friendships with good people like Gary Cone, Quedéir Castiglhâ, Dan Lorentz, and so many others. and Tomás Gariçéir...

el glelp... The one thing on which the two countries agree wholeheartedly is the need for the *glelp* to thrive and grow. *Qator Itríns*, Miestrâ Schivâ's monthly compendium of articles on all-matters-Republic Talossan, has been a boon for the language in that her monthly editor's column comes in both English and Talossan! Not since Støtanneu of many, many years ago was published solely in Talossan have we seen so much of *el glelp* in a Talossan media publication.

Our Republic

What are we doing wrong, and what are we doing right? (Warning: the following section is G-rated:)

Grace

In keeping the Republic from one day splitting at the seams as the Kingdom did, it means giving someone the benefit of a doubt. Of course, avoiding the need to have grace in this sense is the best policy, and looking at one's self to find one's own mistakes is key for things working between us within Talossa and in our "real" lives. For example, the Council for Talossan Unity naming fiasco was defused once D. N. Vercáriâ realized the honest mistakes he made -- and everyone decided it was not as big an issue as they thought. Such a conciliatory and gracious gesture is alien to Ben Madison.

Glelp

The Republic is on the right track here. We must give credit where credit is due: the language, besides the community he founded, is Ben Madison's legacy to the world. We must continue to show that making the language grow and letting some of its most enthusiastic participants involve themselves in its development and growth is paramount to its survival. And for the language to survive, there must be but *one* Glelp, not two balkanized dialects (Republic and Kingdom).

Government

A body of laws devoid of loopholes and legalistic time-bombs will keep things running smoothly. We need to do a good job at keeping up with our citizens more often than just at election time. Where and when Real Life permits, it is the right and duty of every citizen of this country to, at minimum, keep up with what's going on in society, government, politics, language development, and what-not.

Delegation of authority and empowered deputies are musts. Without these, the Republic is vulnerable to circumstances such as those in my life and my response to them that helped to bring down the Válcadác'h Coalition. Deputies and delegation will reduce burnout, create harmony, and make things run like clockwork. Every minister and government official needs at least one deputy ready to take over when needed. Especially the Secretary of State...

By way of the development of a permanent Constitution, the Republic has taken giant steps forward in providing its citizenry with an elegant and concise body of fundamental law. A big part of this is the organized archiving of our laws and statutes. The National and Provisional Registers and the Mitchell Codex is a model for how the archiving of our laws could work. Before the Cybercit era began in 1996, this sort of thing was something the Kingdom did extremely well. The Cybercit Era led to a false sense of security: "It's okay. It's on the hard drive and web server." Paper doesn't crash, and having multiple archives of things does not hurt.

Gathering

The gathering of new people must always be a priority. Current Immigration Minister Ián Anglatzarâ (and Andy Lowry before him) is a model for future Immigration Ministers. He is a tireless advocate for prospectives, keeps the citizenry informed, and perhaps most-importantly, ensures that prospectives' first impression of the Republic is efficient -- yet lightheartedly friendly.

Besides, we need new blood all the time because even in the best of times, people become bored with Talossa and, like Mike Dinitz in the Kingdom, want to move on with their lives and say goodbye.

This, of course, brings up the issue of competition with *el Regipäts*. Will prospectives choose the Republic or the Kingdom? Both countries agree on this much: no one may do both at once.

Geekness

If this week Marti-Páir Furxhéir is abducted by aliens, how will we get by?

Gab

The Madison-vs-Gruber war was one of words (combined with a few actions from Ben, of course) that hurt people. We don't want that to ever become the *modus operandi* of our Republic. Yet, we don't want the Republic, either through culture or through direct government intervention, to stifle free speech and language in the paranoid fear someone might become *offended*. We in the Republic need to be tolerant in a way Ben never was: having the ability to disagree with someone about sensitive topics like euthanasia, abortion, and Iraq while still maintaining communication and camaraderie.

We are doing a decent job already in the Republic, and we need to keep it up!

Reunification?

"In two, Talossa will die twice. There is one great and urgent task for the two Talossas: become one again." Can this ever happen?

Perhaps there is hope, but for me, fulfilling this hope will be predicated partly on the following items, all of which are non-negotiable:

1. Appropriate punishment being meted out to Ben Madison and Amy Durnford for the digging-up and exposure of Gruber's petty criminal past and the using of same to make spurious charges against him, even if Gruber's worldwide

reputation was not damaged. If expulsion is not in the cards, keeping the Royals royal and stripping them of all political and constitutional powers would be a good thing.

2. The unconditional acceptance of every single Republic citizen and prospective into the Kingdom. The rejection of even one person negates the entire thing. Of course, this would probably only fly in the Republic with unanimous consent from every citizen, including Chris Gruber. I do not see this happening any time in the near future.

Since 1 June 2004, Ben has not given me any reason to believe he would ever accept these conditions. I also believe his iron grip on the Kingdom's reins of power will never be loosened enough to force him to.

And as time goes on, the Republic and Kingdom will continue to forge their own traditions and culture. Already, the Kingdom bears little resemblance to the Kingdom we once knew. I see much more of an ad-hoc atmosphere: witness the ease with which any prospective may obtain citizenship in the Regipäts without having to be screened by Cort or Ziu. This is also due in part to the changes in its Internet presence and the increased Milwaukee-centeredness of the King. I do not believe Ben has ever really been comfortable with Talossa on the Internet, and that he, for the time being, will not look there for new growth. If he had his way, I think he would want every new citizen from now on to be from the greater Milwaukee area.

Which brings us to our connection with...

East-side Milwaukee, Wisconsin



...and how much it should be a part of who we are and what we do as Talossans...

To have a Talossa without the East Side of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, would be to have a nationette that should not bear the name *Talossa*. One of the great appeals of the Kingdom to me was the local old-growth network of Madison-Cone-Metáiriâ-Verbotten, etc. It added to the Regipäts a centeredness and sense of deep-rooted community I loved dearly. A problem and handicap we have in the Republic is that when we seceded, we elected to cut ourselves off from a great deal of this network, the only remnant of which that we have now being in the person of Art Verbotten.

Happily, the Republic consensus is in resounding favor of keeping as much of Milwaukee and our roots as possible. There are some questions, still. How much of the Berber things do we keep? What about the Kingdom-created names of provincial cantons and cities?

And what about our TalossaFest, or whatever we end up calling it?

All of these questions will be answered, and I am happy to report for posterity that everyone in the Republic is concerned about all these issues and are at the very least talking about these things.

Above is a satellite image of the Milwaukee East Side. It was archived from <http://maps.google.com>

Talossa

In a Prime Ministerial Speech to the Nation from 9 October 2002, I included this from Art Verbotten (who had written it a short time before). More than anything else I have come across, it encapsulates everything that is good about Talossa.

Hey Internet

Send us your intelligent, your geeks, your religious fanatics longing to explain themselves.

Send us your language nazis in need of Reich.

Send us your huddled opinionated masses, too intelligent for Jerry Springer, but who long to have strenuous, and occasionally vitriolic, contact.

Come To Us.

Swarm, like the hungry mosquitoes you are, around the porch light that is Talossa.

Finally, it must be said that most, if not all, of the Founding Parents wear glasses. By Ben Madison's logic, it must mean that secessionist tendencies are bad for one's eyesight.

Cheers!

The Republic of Talossa website: www.republicoftalossa.com

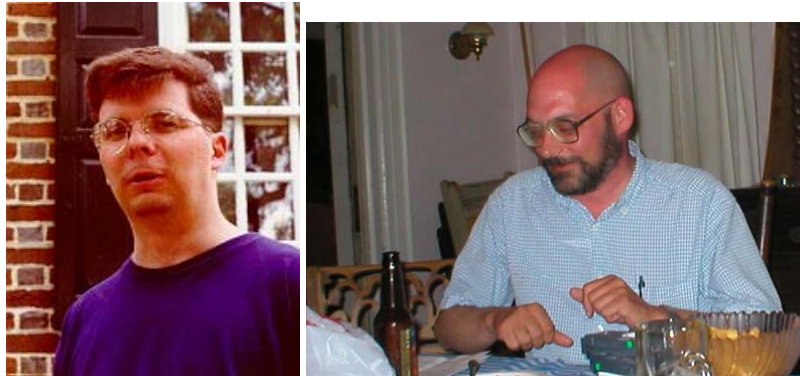
The Talossan Public Fora: www.talossaonline.com

Qator Itríns may be had at <http://quator.talossa.net>

Visit www.talossapedia.com and read up on Talossa!



*A view of the Milwaukee skyline, aka Maritiimi province
This photo was archived from www.milwaukee.org*



The Founding Parents of the Republic of Talossa

Not pictured are Greg Tisher and Andrea Thompson

Dates in parentheses indicate that of each photograph.

Top row from l-r: Gödafriðu Válcadác'h (2002), JP Griffin (ca. 1997), & Matthias Muth (ca. 1996),

2nd row from top: Michael Pope (ca. 1999) & Andy Lowry (T-Fest 2003)

3rd row from top: Lisa Skovalia (T-Fest 2003) & Chris Gruber (summer, 2003),

Bottom row: UC (cropped from a photo taken with Tomás Gariçéir in February, 2002), & Gjermund Higræff (ca. 1997)

Bibliography

The online record of the Wittenberg X internet discussion forum

www.talossaonline.com - Click on the “Wittenberg” forum. Eventually, this will be made available in a more-printable format by way of the publication of the Lytheria Codex, Volume II.

The Lytheria Codex, Volume III

Published by Oraclâ Press in 2005, this is a repository of primary-source materials and archives from the November 2002 to 1 June 2004 era. Contained therein are issues of Stötanneu from October, 2002 until February, 2004, website archives of the Black Hand and Grey Congress Parties, email correspondence made publicly-available, and more.

The Lowry Codex, aka the Lytheria Codex, Volume I, Book 1

Wittenberg VIII was online from ca. winter 2001 until 19 February, 2003. At this writing, the archives of the actual posts from this discussion forum were lost in a series of server crashes. However, an archive exists of the “main board” view of Wittenberg VIII, containing the subject headings of the posts from October 2002 to 20 February 2003, the date of the launch of Wittenberg X. This archive is named in honor of Andy Lowry, who made his Talossan debut at the time covered in this archive.

This index was compiled by Gödafriêu Válcadác’h and was published by Oraclâ Press in 2005.

Further reading:

Oraclâ No. 52: 12 May 2004

This issue contains a copy of the 1997 Organic Law of the Kingdom of Talossa, as last amended in October, 2003.



Cézebre province, ca. 2000.

This photo may have a connection with Kingdom citizen Albrec’ht S., but I cannot remember from where I archived this photo.